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When he becomes she
Playwright Doug Wright on 'I Am My Own Wife.'
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BAY AREA REPORTER

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Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities since 1971

Microsoft caves to religious right

by Lisa Keen

The Microsoft Corporation, once heralded by many in the gay community as a model employer when it comes to treating gay employees fairly, has suffered a major crash in that regard. The computer giant is scrambling now to explain why it suddenly decided to withdraw its support from a Washington state gay civil rights bill, which failed by only one vote in the state Senate last week.

Microsoft is claiming that it simply decided to be "neutral" on the state legislation this year, in part, it said, because the county where most of its employees work already has nondiscrimination protection and in part because the corporation wanted to focus "on a limited number of issues that are directly related to our business."

But according to the weekly Seattle newspaper, the *Stranger*, which first reported the story, Microsoft's decision to position itself as neutral on the bill was really a move to avert a threatened boycott by the religious right. The *Stranger* reported that Bradford L. Smith, Microsoft's senior vice president, told a group of gay employees at an April 4 meeting that a local evangelical Christian pastor had threatened to organize a national boycott of Microsoft products unless the company withdrew its support of the bill and fire two employees who had testified in favor of it.

Additionally, it was reported this week that Ralph Reed, former head of the Christian Coalition, is on retainer for Microsoft, earning \$20,000 a month.

In an interview with the *New York Times*, the pastor, Ken Hutcherson of Antioch Bible Church in Redmond, Washington, confirmed that he did threaten Microsoft with a boycott.

"I told them I was going to give them something to be afraid of Christians about," Hutcherson told the *Times*, adding that Microsoft "backed off" from the civil rights bill after that threat.

While acknowledging that the corporation did meet with Hutcherson, Microsoft steadfastly denies that the company decided to withdraw its support for the gay civil rights bill because of pressure from Hutcherson or anyone else. Corporate spokeswoman Tami Beggasse told the *Bay Area Reporter* that Microsoft officials met with a variety of people and groups on both sides of the bill and "listened to all points of view" but that its legislative team had decided "long be-

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HRC slams Badlands owner in bias report

by Matthew S. Bajko



Longtime activist Calvin Gipson, holding bullhorn, and members of And Castro for All rally outside San Francisco Badlands bar Tuesday evening.

Ending a 10-month investigation into allegations of racism against Castro bar owner Les Natali, the San Francisco Human Rights Commission has found that Natali discriminated against both employees and patrons based on race.

In a 21-page report issued Tuesday, April 26, the HRC found that Natali unfairly denied entry to African American patrons at his bar San Francisco Badlands through a "no bag" policy that was "rarely enforced against white patrons" and that Natali "selectively applied" a dress code to black customers.

The HRC report also found that Natali referred to African Americans as "non-Badlands customers" who should be discouraged from entering the bar and that he required black patrons to present multiple forms of identification to enter the bar, a policy that violates city codes.

Natali's attorney, Paul Melbostad, refuted the assertion that asking for two forms of ID

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SF creates country's first citywide speed task force

by Matthew S. Bajko

San Francisco this week became the country's first city to appoint a task force to address crystal methamphetamine use. With the backing of Mayor Gavin Newsom, the task force met for the first time Tuesday, April 26 in order to develop a comprehensive approach to what health officials call an epidemic affecting myriad groups in the city.

"We simply have not focused enough attention on crystal," said Newsom. "No city in the country has done it. Everyone is talking about it but no one wants to step up."

The task force is being co-chaired by Supervisor Bevan Dufty, who since being elected to office two years ago has made tackling crystal meth a top priority.

"There are other cities not dealing with this issue because it is a difficult issue," said Dufty, who has also criticized local and national gay groups as well as gay publications for not making meth use in the gay community more of a priority. "This is an important step for San Francisco but also a national step."

The task force, comprised of health officials, law enforcement agencies, social service providers, and concerned citizens, stems from public hearings Dufty held two years



Supervisor Bevan Dufty, left, listens as Mayor Gavin Newsom announces the formation of a citywide crystal methamphetamine task force. At right is HIV prevention director Steve Tierney.

ago on how speed is impacting the gay community. For years health officials have warned that speed use is a leading cause in spikes of syphilis rates and other sexually transmitted diseases. They also have warned that speed use could cause a similar spike in HIV rates.

While San Francisco has seen its HIV rates plateau, health officials point to speed use as a major reason for why HIV infections are not declining. According to City Clinic, 31 percent of HIV-positive individuals reported

crystal use in the previous six months.

Florida health officials recently released a study connecting speed use to a spike in HIV rates in gay men in their community. The issue of speed use and HIV infection rates became a national concern in February when New York City health officials sounded alarms over one gay man who allegedly used speed, engaged in unprotected sex with hundreds of partners, and developed a strain of

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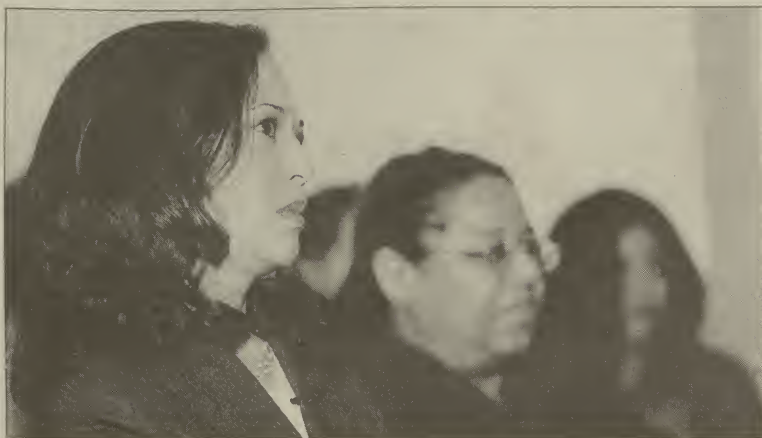
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District Attorney Kamala Harris and CUAV Executive Director Terry Person-Harris at CUAV's press conference on antigay hate crimes.

Anti-LGBT incidents increase

Mission, Castro sites of most attacks in SF

by Zak Szymanski

Nationally and locally, reports of anti-LGBT incidents continued to rise in 2004, according to a comprehensive report released this week by a coalition of anti-violence programs.

San Francisco's Community United Against Violence announced the findings at a press conference on Tuesday, April 26 that was attended by local advocates, victims, and representatives from law enforcement and the district attorney's office.

The increase in anti-LGBT incidents likely is linked to controversial historic events like San Francisco's same-sex marriages, said advocates, noting that as the LGBT community responded to political attacks and gained visibility, hateful rhetoric and backlash intensified.

Across the United States, the total number of anti-LGBT incidents rose 4 percent, from 1,720 reported incidents in 2003 to 1,792 incidents in 2004. There was an additional rise of 7 percent in the number of offenders reported, from 2,467 in 2003 to 2,637 in 2004, a signal of a return to mob-like attacks on LGBT victims, and a 273 percent increase in attacks committed by organized hate groups. Other national trends included a 14 percent increase in the use of weapons, and a 92 percent rise in the number of organizations targeted for attacks.

"As always, there are mixed conclusions that can be drawn from the data submitted this year. However, the political, social, and cultural dynamics that began to profoundly affect anti-LGBT violence and most member programs in the latter half of 2003 clearly

continued through 2004," said the report, issued by the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, a network of over 20 anti-violence organizations that monitor and respond to incidents of LGBT bias motivated crimes. The regions participating in this year's report included Chicago; Cleveland; Columbus, Ohio; Houston; New York City; San Francisco; and the states of Colorado, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, and Pennsylvania. Groups in Missouri, Arizona, and Vermont also supplied information.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force was more blunt in directly attributing the increased violence to organized anti-LGBT political efforts; in a statement released on Tuesday, NGLTF Executive Director Matt Foreman said, "The leaders of America's antigay industry are directly responsible for the continuing surge in hate violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people."

Noting that other forms of hate violence continue to fall, and that a 26 percent spike in anti-LGBT violence was seen in 2003, Foreman said that it was no coincidence that crimes against the community rose as political forces stepped up their own assaults.

"This spike in violence parallels the exact same period since the right went into demonic, antigay hyperdrive following the Supreme Court's *Lawrence v. Texas* decision in July of 2003. Since then, church pews and the public airwaves have been awash in ugly, antigay rhetoric and fear-mongering," said Foreman. "These words obviously do not just vanish into the ether — as intended, they are absorbed and become fuel and justification for violence. To say otherwise defies reality."

"The literal blood of the thou-

sands of gay people physically wounded by hate during 2004 is on the hands of Jerry Falwell, James Dobson, Tony Perkins, and so many others who spew hate for partisan gain and personal enrichment."

Local trends

In the Bay Area, reports of anti-LGBT incidents increased by 7 percent, from 317 in 2003 to 340 in 2004, according to CUAV, the local agency that works in conjunction with NCAVP for the annual report.

Cases reported included 30 rape and sexual assaults and 41 incidents of vandalism. There was a drop in anti-LGBT murders reported to CUAV, from five in 2003 to two in 2004.

Mirroring national trends, the Bay Area experienced a rise in the use of weapons during anti-LGBT attacks, from 22 weapons reported in 2003, to 88 weapons reported in 2004. The neighborhood experiencing the most anti-LGBT attacks was the Mission, with 53 cases reported to CUAV in 2004. Of these cases, 31 occurred on street, on public transportation, and/or in and around clubs, bars, and public institutions, while 13 cases occurred in private residences. The Castro was the second highest location of anti-LGBT incidents, with 27 cases, while the Tenderloin saw 19 cases and South of Market experienced 14 cases.

Perpetrators of anti-LGBT incidents included 303 males, and 66 females. Victims included 177 males and 93 females reporting incidents in 2004.

Other data on victims may reflect San Francisco's activism around its ever-expanding gender and sexuality categories: 16 male-

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by Matthew S. Bajko

"Guaranteeing equality and religious freedom to all members of our society embodies the promise and values upon which America was founded," said Assemblyman Dave Jones (D-Sacramento), chair of the committee and a coauthor of the bill. "This bill simply ensures that the state of California respects the concept of separation of church and state, and treats all people respectfully and equally in



Bill Wilson

"America was founded on the concept of separation of church and state, with the guarantee that religious freedom will be respected and the state will treat all people equally in the eyes of the law."

Anti-gay groups also showed up in force, with Brigham Young University law professor Lynn Wardle saying Leno's bill violates Proposition 22, the 2000 ballot initiative passed by voters that said California would not recognize gay marriages performed in other states. Wardle and Randy Thomasson, president of the Campaign for Children and Families, who also spoke Tuesday, have argued that Leno's bill is unconstitutional because it would take a

A black and white portrait of a young man with dark, wavy hair, wearing a suit jacket, white shirt, and a patterned tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The photo is mounted on a light-colored card.

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Jose Sarria honorary Pride marshal

compiled by Cynthia Laird

The San Francisco LGBT Pride Celebration Committee Inc. has announced that Jose Sarria (a.k.a. Empress I, The Widow Norton) has received the Lifetime Achievement Grand Marshal Award for this year's Pride Parade.



Jose Sarria

Sarria has been involved in San Francisco's gay community for more than 50 years. In 1949 his popular act at the Black Cat bar, "God Save Us Nelly Queens" focused attention among gays in the city. In 1961, he became the first openly gay person to run for elective office when he entered the race for supervisor. While he did not win, Sarria shocked the gay and straight political establishment by picking up 5,600 votes.

Sarria helped organize the first public drag ball in the early 1960s, and was named "Queen of the Ball." Sarria then quickly proclaimed himself "Empress of San Francisco." Today, the Imperial Court is still crowning empresses and emperors and has been a major fundraiser for LGBT and HIV/AIDS charities.

"To be nominated and singled out this way is such an honor," Sarria said in a statement. "I know I have led the way because I see it now. People are saying and doing what I said and did years ago. I am very proud."

The 35th annual Pride Parade and Festival takes place June 25-26.

Dyke March benefit Friday

Organizers of the San Francisco Dyke March will hold a fundraiser Friday, April 29 from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Dolores Park Café, 501 Dolores Street, across from the park, in San Francisco.

Tina D'Elia will host the benefit, along with emcee Alma Garcia. Entertainment includes Judea Eden, Kaylah and Soulography, Damegoodz, a Syke Collective featuring Lynn Breedlove, Nafis, Blair Hansen, Axton Kincaid, and Chave/Allotta Boutte. There will be a raffle and admission is \$10-\$25 sliding scale with no one turned away. It is an all-ages event.

A second fundraiser will take place May 21 at El Rio, 3158 Mission Street, from 4 to 8 p.m.

For more information, visit www.dykemarch.com or call (415) 241-8882. Inquiries about the march, slated for June 25, can also be directed to the SF Dyke March, San Francisco Women's Building, 3543 18th Street, #2, San Francisco, CA 94110.

MUMC sidewalk sale

The Merchants of Upper Market and Castro are sponsoring a sidewalk sale in the Castro Saturday, April 30 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. MUMC President Paul Moffett said that businesses with sidewalk frontage are invited to participate in the areas on Market Street from Octavia to Castro, and on Castro Street from Market to 19th. The event is being co-sponsored by the San Francisco Small Business Commission as part of Small Business Week, which runs through Saturday.

East Bay gay chorus show

The Oakland-East Bay Gay Men's Chorus, and Voices, a lesbian choral ensemble, will present "Let Music Live!" Saturday, April 30 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, May 1 at 5 p.m. at the Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, 3534 Lakeshore Avenue, in Oakland.

The OEBGMC has become known for its varied repertoire of heartening an insightful music, while Voices' reputation is built on its purity of tone and flawless performance of a cappella works. Both groups celebrate musical excellence, diversity, and a spirit of community volunteerism.

"It's always a pleasure to prepare our chorus for a concert," said OEBGMC Artistic Director Michael Carlson, "and this concert is special."

Yulia Ronskaya, director of Voices, said both groups benefit from working together.

Tickets for Saturday's performance are \$12 in advance or \$15 at the door and can be purchased online at www.OEBGMC.org or by calling (800) 706-2389.

Hep C workshop

The Living with Hepatitis C Project at Quan Yin Healing Arts Center will present a free workshop on hepatitis C care Saturday, April 30 at 455 Valencia Street in San Francisco.

The morning session begins with a workshop focusing on Chinese herbal treatment for hepatitis C infection at 9:30 a.m. Misha Cohen, OMD, L.Ac. will lead the discussion. A mini Qi-Gong class will then follow, with the workshop ending at noon. A light breakfast will be provided.

Saturday's workshop is part of an ongoing series designed to enhance knowledge, improve well-being, and assist in health care decision making for people living with hepatitis C. Those living with HCV, their partners, family members, and service providers are welcome to participate.

For more information, e-mail Yukihiro Ippei Yasuda at QYHAC@aol.com or call (415) 861-4964.

Maitri benefit Sunday

Legendary entertainer Carol Channing and local jazz diva Paula West will take the stage for an evening of "Bliss" to benefit Maitri Hospice on Sunday, May 1 at 5:30 p.m. at the Bambuddha Lounge in San Francisco's Phoenix Hotel, 601 Eddy Street.

Special guest Armistead Maupin is also expected to make an appearance, and there will be a

performance by the Walnut Creek Aquanauts, a synchronized swimming team.

Maitri is the only hospice in Northern California exclusively serving AIDS patients, and the event is billed as an evening of "love and compassion," with fine cuisine, fine wines and spirits, and a silent auction featuring artwork, getaways, and much more.

Maitri got its start in 1987, when Issan Dorsey, a Zen monk, opened the Hartford Street Zen Center to care for a student dying of AIDS. In 1997, Maitri moved into a custom-designed 15-bed facility and continued to provide 24-hour care to low-income men and women severely debilitated by HIV disease. Since opening its doors in 1987, Maitri has admitted and served over 500 late-stage AIDS patients.

Tickets for Bliss start at \$150 per person and can be purchased online at www.maitrisf.org or by calling (415) 675-4775.

Business training for HIVers

The Small Business Administration and the Positive Resource Center will offer training to people living with HIV who are interested in starting their own business. The workshop takes place Tuesday, May 3 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the SBA Entrepreneur Center, 455 Market Street, in San Francisco.

Registration is free and includes lunch.

This marks the ninth workshop SBA and PRC have presented and officials from both agencies said people learn a lot.

"When we started these, we knew that some people living with HIV could do better owning their businesses than working for someone else," said SBA's Gary Marshall. "The flexibility and control entrepreneurs have can be important to people with complicated medical regimens and fluctuating levels of energy."

PRC's Mark Misrok agreed, "We're working with many people living with HIV/AIDS whose goals include self-employment."

To register, visit www.acteva.com/go/sba. For more information, call (415) 744-6771.

Workshop on landlord, tenant issues

The city of San Mateo and the Landlord and Tenant Information and Referral Collaborative will present a free workshop Tuesday, May 3 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Central Park Recreation Center, 50 E. 5th Avenue, in San Mateo.

The workshop will include information on security deposits, evictions, rent increases, repairs, housing discrimination, small claims court, and mediation. Speakers from a variety of organizations will participate, including Bay Area Legal Aid, the California Apartment Association, the Housing Authority of San Mateo County, and the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center.

For more information, contact Amanda Kim with the collaborative at (650) 802-7504 or e-mail Amanda@landlordtenantinfo.org.

Palestinian LGBT leader visits SF

by Zak Szymanski

Before any group can politically organize, its members must first be able to identify one another. For more than 100 gay Palestinians who have just begun to introduce themselves through social activities at Jerusalem Open House, getting involved in activism of any kind sounds like "the craziest thing they could do," even if that activism is not gay related, according to Hansen Maikay, coordinator of JOH's Palestinian Outreach Initiative.

"Jerusalem's LGBT Palestinian community is less political. They have just started to be open about their sexual identity," said Maikay, a 27-year-old Palestinian lesbian, speaking to an open meeting held at San Francisco's LGBT Community Center on Monday, April 25. The meeting served as a way for the local LGBT community to meet LGBT people from Israel, to get acquainted with JOH's outreach to Palestinians, and to discuss the controversial World Pride celebration hosted this year by JOH in Jerusalem from August 18-28.

Maikay, who is traveling to make contacts with LGBT Muslims and Arabs and educate others about Palestinian LGBT people, was in the Bay Area until Tuesday. Other stops along her tour include New York, Boston, and London.

For Maikay, her meetings with San Francisco LGBT people – including center officials and members of groups like Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism – helped her outreach efforts and provided her with a respectful dialogue around World Pride activities. Such conversations highlighted on one hand the dilemma she faces while trying to promote an event which, due to its location, will automatically exclude some LGBT Arabs, but on the other hand affirmed the need for such an event in order to bring more Arab and Muslim visibility to World Pride and to allow the LGBT communi-



Hansen Maikay

ty to unite despite cultural and political differences.

World Pride – a gathering of LGBT communities from around the globe organized by InterPride, the international association of Pride parades – first took place in Rome in 2000 and attracted about 250,000 people.

Like Jerusalem's annual Pride Parade, which attracts about 5,000 people, the theme of this year's World Pride is "Love Without Borders," a slogan many find ironic because Israel's strictly enforced border policies will forbid the participation of many LGBT Arabs and Muslims. LGBT communities worldwide have expressed concern over the location of World Pride for this very reason, and some in attendance at Monday's San Francisco meeting expressed their conflicting feelings about wanting to oppose discriminatory Israeli policies while also wanting to support JOH's work and outreach to LGBT Palestinians.

"I am sensitive to the communities that say we should not be involved with World Pride," said

Thom Lynch, executive director of the center, which is still debating whether to send representatives from San Francisco to the event. "But it's difficult to look at JOH and say, 'No, we will not help you as a sister organization.'"

Recent coalition efforts by Muslim, Christian, and Jewish leaders in Israel and the U.S. to stop World Pride are also incentives, said Lynch, to support the event as an "opportunity to stand up to religious extremism." Condemning homosexuality, religious leaders in Jerusalem last month said that the event would turn the holy city into a "dirty city" and likely would provoke violence.

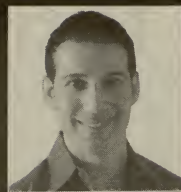
Whether the center will actually have the funds to send representatives to World Pride is another matter, but in the meantime the organization may draft a statement in support of the event while also making clear that its position is not support for governmental policy.

Maikay said she approaches her work at JOH similarly, separating political differences from the personal lives of the people she meets. The theme of World Pride, she said, recognizes the borders imposed upon their daily lives, but demands "to have one day, in this crazy reality, to make disappear those borders."

Similarly, her outreach to Palestinians seeks to be a "strong voice for pluralistic values and diversity with the LGBT and the larger Palestinian society," according to a statement from her group.

Run by volunteers, the three-year-old Palestinian initiative offers support services, an Arabic Web site, a help line, and social events for the traditionally isolated LGBT community, as well as workshops that seek to build bridges to educational professionals and human rights organizations. Unlike other programs of JOH – which has been in existence for nine years – the Palestinian initiative is still earning its reputation as a "safe space" for LGBT people to gather. The initiative mostly attracts gay men due to so-

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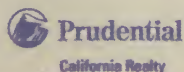


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OPEN FORUM

Microsoft's meltdown

Microsoft's decision to withdraw support for a Washington state gay nondiscrimination bill is a bitter pill for the LGBT community to swallow. For years, Microsoft has been at the forefront of corporate gay rights, and all that progress vanished in an instant. While Microsoft denies it withdrew support for the bill, which failed by a single vote in the state Senate last week, the bottom line is that the computer software giant did exactly that. Most disturbingly, Microsoft bowed – no, caved – to the religious right reportedly after a fundy preacher met with company officials and threatened a national boycott if Microsoft supported the measure. Think about that for a minute. Microsoft, which arguably has a monopoly in the computer operating system business, was cowed by the threat of a boycott, when such an action would be virtually impossible to sustain without driving nearly everyone who uses a computer to an open-source operating system such as Linux. Even users of Apple products have Microsoft software, not to mention the more prevalent PCs. Simply put, it was a hollow threat that was unlikely to succeed because millions of people and companies depend on Microsoft's products. It's highly unlikely that companies around the world would spend billions of dollars to switch computer systems because Microsoft supported nondiscrimination for gays in the workplace.

And it is correct to say that the company withdrew its support, as first reported in the Seattle alternative weekly, the *Stranger*, which broke the story last week. The firm sent a letter of support for the bill to the Washington Legislature last year; this year it decided to remain "neutral" – apparently after the meeting with Ken Hutcherson, pastor of the 3,500-member Antioch Bible Church in Redmond, Washington, site of Microsoft's corporate headquarters.

Microsoft's action, or inaction as the case may be, sends a chilling message to gays and lesbians in the workplace. In a time when more and more Fortune 500 firms are shoring up nondiscrimination policies, and more and more are taking the next step by including gender identity in such policies, Microsoft's decision is a step back for equal treatment in the workplace. If a giant conglomerate such as Microsoft can be forced

to backslide on its past support for equality, what's next? We don't even want to think about that.

A quick check of Microsoft's corporate Web site shows that the company claims to be committed to diversity: "At Microsoft, we believe that diversity enriches our performance and products, the communities where we live and work, and the lives of our employees." Really? Tell that to the two gay workers who testified in support of the bill at a legislative hearing. When Hutcherson met with the company vice presidents, he insisted that the workers be fired! At least Microsoft should be applauded for standing up to that threat by not acting on Hutcherson's demands.

San Francisco-based Out & Equal Workplace Advocates, which promotes equality in the business community, was stunned by Microsoft's action, calling it "most disturbing." The Human Rights Campaign's new president, Joe Solmonese, fired off a letter to the company. The Los Angeles Gay and Les-

bian Center, in the most creative response we've seen yet, actually asked Microsoft to return an award the center gave it a few years ago. There's been no word from Chairman Bill Gates or CEO Steve Ballmer on whether they've complied with the center's request. They should. The award means nothing now.

Ballmer and Gates have stated that they've been surprised by the furious response the company has received from the LGBT community, including the many gays who work for them.

Their surprise demonstrates that some straight allies just don't get it. With the rising tide of antigay conservatism that's sweeping the country, they should have known that remaining "neutral" on an important piece of statewide legislation would send a definite signal that Microsoft was backtracking – and that's exactly what the company did. By bowing to pressure from one antigay preacher, Microsoft sent a strong message of intolerance to the community. Think about that the next time you're at your computer. ▼



Editorial



Names reporting is bad policy

by Fred Dillon and Dana Van Gorder

One of the most debated questions over the course of the AIDS epidemic has been whether the government should require the reporting of HIV infections by name to public health authorities. This debate has been rekindled with the introduction of a bill in the California Legislature – SB945 by Senator Nell Soto (D-Pomona) – that would replace code-based HIV reporting with HIV reporting by name. This bill has been approved by the Senate Health Committee and will move to the Senate Judiciary Committee on May 3. The San Francisco AIDS Foundation is opposing this legislation. We continue to believe that code-based HIV reporting strikes the appropriate balance between the legitimate public health needs of tracking the epidemic with those of protecting the confidentiality of people with HIV and not erecting new barriers to HIV testing.

A bit of history and background is needed to understand this increasingly complex issue. While AIDS cases have been reported from nearly the start of the epidemic, states have taken very different approaches to the reporting of HIV infections. Many states, including California, have resisted HIV names reporting out of concern for the confidentiality of people with HIV and the possibility that some people will be deterred from seeking HIV testing if they know their names may be reported to the government.

As effective HIV treatments became available and individuals began living longer without progressing to AIDS, a consensus emerged among HIV advocates, policy makers, and public health experts that

HIV reporting was needed to better track the epidemic and plan for needed services. The debate then shifted to whether HIV-positive people should be reported to the government using their names or using a unique code that would provide information about HIV infection trends without turning over names to the government. After several years of debate, California decided in 2002 to report HIV cases using a unique code rather than names.

The impetus for SB945 and the proposal to abandon California's code-based reporting system stems from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 1999, the CDC recommended that all states implement HIV reporting systems. Although it preferred that the states operate name-based systems, the CDC guidelines clearly allowed states to decide what kind of reporting system they wished to operate, as long as those systems met performance criteria outlined by the CDC. Since that time, however, the CDC has refused to accept any of this code-based data from the nine states – including California – that have opted for this type of reporting system.

Supporters of SB945 argue that California should shift to names reporting immediately because the state could risk losing federal AIDS dollars as a result of the CDC's position. Allocation of Ryan White CARE Act dollars – which provides funding for critical medical, treatment and support services for low-income Americans living with HIV/AIDS – is currently based on an estimate of the number of people living with

AIDS in a given state or locality. The CARE Act is up for reauthorization by Congress this year and some changes under discussion would tie the allocation of future CARE funds to the combined number of AIDS and HIV cases. If this was to occur and the CDC continues to refuse data from code-based states, this change could disadvantage those states in future distributions of CARE funds.

In our opinion, it is premature to give up this principled fight. The reality is that Congress has the ultimate power to decide if states may continue to choose between name and code-based systems, and it is unlikely to make that decision until much later this year.

If HIV data is to be included in distribution formulas, the timeframe for when such data will be included, and how it will be phased in, also must be decided by

Congress during this process. Congress will also decide the extent to which individual states or localities might be protected from reductions in their CARE Act funding. All of these factors could alter the extent to which California's AIDS funding is affected and what, if any, impact that should have on our HIV reporting system.

Based on this current landscape, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation opposes any changes to California's current code-based system and instead joins with the National Association of State & Territorial AIDS Directors in calling on Congress to uphold the right of the states to choose the HIV reporting system they deem most appropriate for their jurisdiction. We continue to believe

Guest Opinion

LETTERS

PAWS responds

We want to thank the B.A.R. and reporter Kevin Davis for the April 21 article on the need for dog-walkers at PAWS ["PAWS in the doghouse over lack of dog-walkers"]. In spite of its alarmist headline, the article shared an important message with the community - PAWS does indeed need more volunteer dog-walkers! We apologize to any of our clients who are on a waiting list for dog-walkers and we will continue to do our best to recruit and assign volunteers to address this critical need. In reading the article, we noticed a few misperceptions about PAWS and we would like to take this opportunity to clarify the record.

In terms of our financial resources, PAWS' annual 2005 expense budget is just under \$800,000. We receive no government funding and rely on the support of individuals with additional funding from corporations and foundations. We currently serve over 450 registered clients in our Companion Animal Support Services program that includes our pet food bank, cat care, grooming assistance, foster care when clients need hospitalization, supplemental vet care, transportation to vet appointments, and, of course, dog-walking. All of our services are offered completely free of charge and, as of last January, we doubled our annual vet fund to \$200/client as well as established a special fund to help cover emergency vet care in life-threatening situations. Each month, PAWS accepts 20 new clients; 75 percent of whom are living with disabling HIV/AIDS.

The reality is, volunteers are a vital, but often scarce, resource. Contrary to popular opinion, volunteers are not free. A large-scale volunteer program requires sustained support in terms of recruitment, training, retention, supervision, and recognition in order to successfully involve volunteers and maximize their potential. With 350 active volunteers providing a variety of services, PAWS actually has one of the larger volunteer forces in the local HIV/AIDS service community. In spite of that large number, we still critically need more volunteers.

Rather than shame our community into providing additional support, whether to PAWS or to any of the other incredible organizations that serve the HIV/AIDS community, we would recommend a more positive approach that recognizes the role all members of our community can play in supporting persons with HIV/AIDS. Whether people choose to walk dogs for PAWS, serve meals for Project Open Hand, or staff the store at Under One Roof, we are all in this together - LGBT and, yes, even straight. Just because the LGBT community was on the forefront of fighting the epidemic, doesn't mean we should do it all alone. Our community's problems belong to all of us. By working together, volunteering and sharing our talents, we can create truly sustainable solutions.

Ultimately, we view the B.A.R. article as a call to action. Within the next couple of months, PAWS will be unveiling a new volunteer recruitment campaign. We would like to ask local merchants to help us send the message about the need for volunteers by distributing flyers and would also like to ask the local LGBT media (including the Bay Area Reporter) to provide in-kind advertising space to help us get the message out.

To volunteer for PAWS, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Daniel Marlay, at (415) 241-1473 or via e-mail at dmarlay@pawssf.org. We promise to welcome you with open PAWS.

John L. Lipp, Executive Director
Kathleen Luzzi, President, Board of Directors
Pets Are Wonderful Support

TJ's welcome in the Castro

The opposition to Trader Joe's brings out the usual suspects ["Trader Joe's Castro store would impact traffic little, study says," April 21] - those afraid of any competition taking part of their captive market and of course our very own District 8 vacillating supervisor Bevan ("who ever has the most money") Dufty.

The real businesses Trader Joe's would compete with are the overpriced and Republican Party contributors, Safeway and Cala Foods. Both contribute heavily to the antigay Republican Party.

Kevin Kean
San Francisco

Editorial on the mark

The editorial by Tom Horn was right on the mark ["This 'Brick' will boomerang!" April 14]. Those of us who lived in San Francisco in the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s know that Senator Dianne Feinstein was one of the first and strongest supporters of the gay community. Without her strong support the community would not be where it is today. The "Pink Brick" award is most unfortunate.

Edward Peter
Red Bluff, California

World Pride: Love without borders?

Sorry, Mr. Dufty, I will not be going to World Pride Jerusalem ["Peace in the Middle East: LGBTs lead by example," Guest Opinion, April 21]. I wouldn't be able to dance in the streets, while on the other side of that wall, Palestinian Jews are being systematically violated. I admire Jerusalem Open House, but its efforts to create "love without borders" don't address the problem of occupation. I could go to World Pride very easily, but gay Palestinians in the occupied territories only a mile away will not be able to go. They will wait at checkpoints, until the events are over. The Israeli soldiers are not occupying Palestinian land to look out for the rights of gay people. When Israelis bulldoze a Palestinian home, our response as gay people cannot be "Oh, well, they were probably homophobic." That is an immoral argument. I do not want my rights to be at the expense of another person's. The occupation is what keeps Israelis and Palestinians from getting along, not some ancient tribal feud. The conflict is actually very simple. One group of people has complete power over another. Just having a support group at Jerusalem Open House, where gay Jews and gay Palestinians talk with each other, will not solve the problem.

Until that power relationship is changed, gay Pride parades will solve nothing. When the wall comes down, and the occupation ends, then we will have love without borders.

Bill Widnall
San Francisco

Gay-supportive Muslims are out there

In his article on Irshad Manji's presentation at the Center ["Lesbian Muslim takes on the left and right," April 21], Mathew Bajko mis-identifies a woman named Armen as a Muslim and a member of a local Muslim group. In fact she identified herself as a Christian Armenian member of SWANABAQ (SouthWest Asian & North African Bay Area Queers), a cultural and social group for mid-eastern queers of various nationalities and religions. Armen's views are as valid as anyone's but she does not speak for Muslims, and in all fairness, she never claimed to. In this she is a lot more honest than Irshad Manji.

Manji talks about herself, her experience, and her mission, which is perhaps fair enough, if you just want to know all about Manji and not about progressive Muslim activism. When asked about Muslims opposing repressive regimes she said nothing about the critiques offered by Tariq Ali, Tariq Ramadan, or Egbal Ahmed (just to name a few). Asked about Muslim leaders fighting sexism, Manji said nothing about Amina Wadud or Asra Nomani who are organizing women-led mixed prayers, Scott Kugle's pro-gay analysis of the Qur'an, Washington, D.C.'s openly gay Imam Daiyee, or any of the many organizations and resources for GLBT Muslims such as al-Fatiha in the U.S. or Salaam Canada. She might have even mentioned that a very mainstream group, the Muslim Canadian Congress, has endorsed same-sex marriage. While gay-supportive Muslim organizations are still a minority they are present, active, and growing, but no - all her answers were all about Irshad.

Like too many TV "journalists" Manji is busier promoting her own image than digging into the true story. She's selling plenty of books, building herself up as a self-invented hero, but her appeal is entirely to people unfamiliar with the work being done in the Islamic community to fight sexism and other forms of oppression. As her non-answers at that luncheon reveal, she is content to perpetuate that ignorance.

Jack Fertig
San Francisco

Apologies for man's outburst

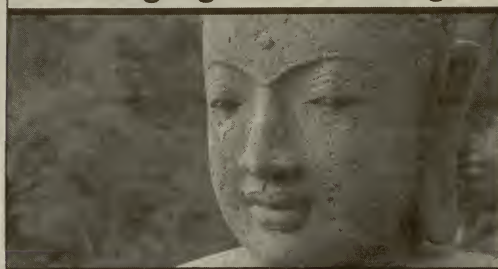
This is in response to the "Fight over parking snafu" item in the Crime & Punishment column [April 14]. Though we strive to reconcile our differences every day, there are some individuals, such as the male driver, who are clueless about the relentless contributions our women allies made and are still making to our HIV community and society in general. They are our mothers, sisters, best friends, neighbors, doctors, etc.

This male driver was certainly not speaking on behalf of the gay community (his alleged comment, "You don't talk back to a gay male in the Castro"). When something as petty compels a person to behave in such a rage, he (the driver) obviously lacks intelligence, common courtesy, and is an embarrassment to the gay community and most importantly to himself. No one but himself is responsible for his ignoramus behavior.

To the woman involved: Please accept my apologies for this less than a man for his outburst of anger. He was not speaking for most gay males in the Castro. Shame on you.

Steven DeGracia
Concord, California

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Through The Looking Glass

Theme From Lewis Carroll's Books

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Stereotypes are meant to be broken

by Gwendolyn Ann Smith

I'm probably going to anger a lot of my readers this week, to which I can only offer my apologies. Not everything I write about is going to be easy to agree with.

In 1979, a book was published about male to female transsexuals. It was called *The Transsexual Empire*. Its author, Janice Raymond, put forth a number of theories about transsexuals as tools of an oppressive patriarchy out to further subjugate women by further codifying gender stereotypes. There's a lot in that book that is patently offensive to me, and there is much that I can refute simply by the living of my own life.

That said — and this is where I get in trouble — she does have a point or two about stereotypes, and how some transfolks may indeed be reinforcing them.

With that in mind, I was talking with a male to female acquaintance of mine a couple of weeks ago, and she began talking of her plans for facial feminization surgery. This surprised me, as she is naturally very attractive, yet she feels that she simply cannot make it as a woman without paying a few thousand dollars to have her face chopped up, ground down, and repositioned into a more esthetically pleasing fashion.

After talking with her, I took a look in some of the various male to female hangouts, and heard a lot of the same viewpoints. For many male to female transsexuals, it seems as if FFS is a "must do" item. Indeed, this seems to be a far greater focus for many than dealing with their own insecurities and their own self-acceptance — both things that ultimately could serve them better than a lot of facial surgery.

The prevailing viewpoint seems to be that the only way to be a successful woman is to be a pretty woman, and therefore this sort of surgery is an imperative to a successful gender transition.

This isn't entirely true, or at least has not been the experience of several decades of other transgender people who've come before. I will also say with no small amount of ego that I seem to do okay myself without ever having my own face sliced and diced.

Still, the viewpoint seems to be that women need to be pretty to be successful, so a transwoman has to also be pretty — or perhaps even prettier — to be a success.

There are indeed plenty of examples of women who have been torn down by others partially due to their appearance, and sometimes these women are called transgender by their detractors.

I doubt I need to name examples, but just ask Janet Reno for one.

Yet even women who may fit societal standards of beauty face this: in one online discussion about conservative pundit Ann Coulter being on the cover of *Time* magazine, more than a few individuals tried to paint her as being transgender.

Think for a second about those two examples, however. Regardless of looks, they

both were given a transgender label as a way of tearing them down. At the same time, both of these women have been successful. Reno was the attorney general under President Clinton, while Coulter has sold oodles of books.

So maybe the knife isn't the answer — but what does this have to do with Raymond's book?

This drive for facial feminization surgery as a means to success is indeed one of those many things that feminism has fought against for several decades. It is true that our society awards the pretty, but by falling into a belief that you can *only* get those awards by being pretty, you further reinforce the paradigm.

While I've focused on this issue of beauty — and don't get me started on breast augmentation — there is a lot more to this.

I've known MTFs who have repressed their own intelligence or assertiveness, because they believe that women are supposed to be "act" less intelligent and submissive.

I've known MTFs who have taken office jobs not because it was all they could find, but because they felt that it would be



Christine Smith

more "appropriate" for them to be secretaries.

I've known MTFs who have become virtual slaves to their boyfriends and husbands, because they seem to feel a "real woman" would have to be with a man — regardless of his demeanor toward her.

Oh, and before anyone feels I'm only going to talk about MTFs, I also do note that I have known a female to male or two in my time who seem to work extra hard to be the biggest, nastiest, macho jerk on the block — perhaps only to fit that stereotype of masculine behavior.

One would assume that it should be in our nature as transgender people to challenge stereotypes, not reinforce them. We wholeheartedly shatter the illusions of this culture when we reject one gender, so why do some feel the need to shore up the stereotypes of another gender?

Perhaps I answered that question earlier: self-acceptance. When I was new to all of this, back in the early 1990s, I was far from self-acceptance. I too might have fallen into a lot of the same views I just argued about earlier, but I worked on myself, and I grew into a place where I don't worry if I'm not enough of a "girl" to be a woman. I ended up with the sort of self-acceptance that can't be found on the end of a scalpel.

More than this, I learned that being a stereotype isn't being yourself — and that's the whole point of this, is it not? ▼

Gwen Smith is not a Barbie girl, nor is she in a Barbie world. You can find her online at www.gwensmith.com.

Bears have 'Hearts of Gold'



Harry Lit, right, of Castrobear Presents and a producer of Lazy Bear Weekend at the Russian River, and his other half, co-producer Allen Eggman, speak to the crowd at the AIDS Emergency Fund's annual benefit Sunday, April 24. Lit, Eggman, and the Lazy Bear Fund were presented with AEF's "Hearts of Gold" award for their fundraising work — last year's Lazy Bear event raised \$153,000 for organizations around the region. Other award recipients at the event were: Grass Roots Gay Rights West for its Real Bad parties; Lyon-Martin Women's Health Services; and longtime AEF volunteers Gary Virginia and Glenon Sutter. Executive Director Mike Smith said the event attracted about 250 people and raised an estimated \$75,000.

Missy Marcus

Drawing the line

by Luke H. Klipp

Editor's note: While the Bay Area Reporter looks for a new political columnist, following the retirement of Wayne Friday, we have invited several LGBT officials and others to write guest columns. This is the 11th in a series of such columns.

Don't join either group! You need to know that, once you join one of them, you will be forever identified with that group, and they don't like each other." These were the words of advice offered five years ago to this freshly arrived San Francisco transplant with a penchant for politics and a desire to pursue that passion in the local LGBT community. The groups in question? The Harvey Milk and Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic clubs.

For someone who'd just arrived in this beautiful city in July 2000, the advice and the subsequent realization of its relative accuracy were a discouragement to actually engage in the local political process. Having no desire to be sharply categorized after having just emigrated from a small-minded Midwestern city where "gay" was a permanent categorization, this political neophyte found the city by the bay at once both freeing in its nonchalance toward the private choices of its politicians and limiting in its snap judgments about the ideological nature of those same politicians.

A little history

According to interviews with past leaders of both organizations, the very beginnings of these clubs were marked by a dispute over the endorsement of the man who would become San Francisco's first gay elected official, Harvey Milk. Alice, the only LGBT Democratic club at the time, refused to support Milk, and so he opted to create his own organization, then known as the Gay Democratic Club. After then-Supervisor Milk's assassination in 1978, the Gay Democratic Club took on his name, to acknowledge his accomplishments and carry on his legacy.

It would be simplistic to claim the clubs have since been in a constant feud. According to past Milk Club President **Robert Haaland**, the two clubs endorsed the same slate of candidates for office in 1990, including the "Lavender Sweep" of **Tom Ammiano** to the school board, and **Carole Migden**, and **Roberta Achtenberg** to the Board of Supervisors. Ammiano later won election to the board. According to Haaland and others, the clubs separated in the 1995 and 1999 mayoral campaigns, and more recently found themselves at odds in the 2000 and 2002 supervisorial races.

In the 1995 mayoral race, Milk endorsed President Clinton's former housing official, Achtenberg, while Alice endorsed Assemblyman **Willie Brown**. Brown went



Mayor Gavin Newsom at the premier of *Pursuit of Equality* Sunday evening at the Castro Theatre with directors Geoff Callan, left, and Mike Shaw.

on to win, defeating former Mayor **Frank Jordan**. And in 1999? That was the year that Ammiano, then president of the Board of Supervisors, with the support of many in the Milk Club, launched a write-in mayoral campaign three weeks before the election. In a race that was a heated struggle for the city's top post, Alice maintained its support for Mayor Brown, while Milk supported Ammiano. Brown won reelection.

The battles between these two clubs have been pitched and heated over the years, but according to Assemblyman **Mark Leno** (D-San Francisco), as the LGBT community finds itself under assault from all sides, we are in a time right now in which the leadership of both clubs has been able to make concerted efforts to reach out to the other side. Indeed, just a week ago, past leaders of both clubs lobbied successfully for the state Democratic Party to endorse a resolution supporting full marriage equality.

This columnist believes that our community has too much at stake to forget our commonalities in the heat of our impassioned ideologies, and hopes that Alice and Milk find ways to forge a stronger relationship, if for no other reason than to increase respect for each others' positions when our differences are highlighted in campaign struggles, as they inevitably will be, as well as strengthen our hand in the fights we face together, including marriage equality.

The struggles ahead

The San Francisco International Film Festival recently premiered a documentary on San Francisco's marriage equality efforts. *Pursuit of Equality*, directed by **Geoff Callan** and **Mike Shaw**, gave an insider's view of the city's fight to advance civil rights for our community. Attendees of the event at the Castro Theatre Sunday evening included Mayor **Gavin Newsom** (Callan's brother-in-law), Assemblyman Leno, lesbian pioneers (and the first couple to be married in San Francisco last year) **Del Martin** and **Phyllis Lyon**, and marriage equality activists **Molly McKay** and **Davina**

Kotulski, among others. Newsom said it was the first time he'd seen the film in its finished form.

Speaking of marriage equality, Assembly Bill 19, Mark Leno's Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act, has passed the Assembly Judiciary Committee and now moves on to the Appropriations Committee. On the bill's likelihood of passage in the Assembly, Leno insists, "It will not only pass the Assembly, it will be on the governor's desk in late August." We like the sound of that, Mark.

According to Leno, should Governor **Arnold Schwarzenegger** sign marriage equality into law in September, we will be faced with a voter referendum in June 2006 that seeks to overturn the new law. In the event Schwarzenegger vetoes the bill, the folks at the Traditional Values Coalition and elsewhere will instead serve up a constitutional amendment to write discrimination into the California Constitution by a ballot initiative. Fortunately, Equality California is already organizing the community and, along with the support of the state Democratic Party and the Milk and Alice Democratic clubs, is building a coalition today to win the fight.

In other news, out gay San Jose City Council member **Ken Yeager** sent an e-mail to supporters this week announcing his bid for a seat on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. The District 4 seat is currently held by Supervisor **Jim Beall**, who will be termed out of office. Yeager is working now to build support for the June 2006 race.

Meanwhile, in San Francisco, **Jeff Sheehy** appears ready to step down as the mayor's AIDS czar, a post in which he has volunteered his time for the past year.

So what else is news? ▼

Luke H. Klipp is secretary of the San Francisco Young Democrats and youth outreach coordinator of the Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club. He is a five-year resident of San Francisco and is originally from Detroit, Michigan.



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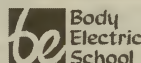
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Palestinian

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cial restrictions on women, but outreach to all genders is ongoing.

Organizations like JOH make many LGBT people on all sides of the Israel-Palestine conflict hopeful for the future. Jean-Paul Samaha, an Arab American and former board member of the San Francisco LGBT center, said he still har-

bors conflict around supporting LGBT causes seemingly at the expense of Arab causes. But he believes that the shared persecution of LGBT people brought together for World Pride could trump religious and political divisions of the nations represented at and excluded from the festivities.

"Our LGBT communities can be the ones to make the peace and bridge the gap," said Samaha.

For all those who wish to orga-

nize internationally but cannot or do not wish to do so with World Pride, added Maikay, other groups such as Black Laundry, Tel Aviv's lesbian political group against the Israeli occupation, will be hosting alternative events in August.

More information on both World Pride and JOH is available at www.worldpride.net. Arguments against supporting World Pride can be found at www.boycottworldpride.org. ▼

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Winning the right way in Connecticut

by Dale Carpenter

There are right ways and wrong ways, helpful ways and counterproductive ways, to win. In Connecticut, advocates for gay marriage won the right and helpful way by persuading state legislators to enact civil unions for same-sex couples. While Connecticut is in some respects exceptional, this has been a lesson in democratic politics that can and should be exported to other states. Several rules from that lesson follow.

Advance through legislatures, not courts. Connecticut becomes the first state in the country to recognize gay relationships in such an exhaustive fashion without being ordered to do so by a court. While religious opponents of gay marriage intend to challenge pro-civil-union state legislators in the 2006 election, I doubt that effort will succeed. Connecticut is a gay-friendly state dominated by liberal Democrats and moderate Republicans. Six of the 12 Republican state senators voted for the civil union law and the Republican governor signed it. The response among the electorate has been muted.

Contrast that to the reaction when courts have forced gay marriage on states. In the 1990s, courts in Hawaii and Alaska ordered the recognition of gay marriage only to have the people in those states ban it by state constitutional amendment, a precedent that would soon be followed. Vermont enacted civil unions in 2000 under compulsion of a court order, which produced a toxic political upheaval. Civil unions survived, but no further progress toward gay marriage has been made there. Massachusetts recognized gay marriages in 2004 only because the state's highest court ordered it. That led directly to consideration of a state constitutional amendment (still pending) and indirectly to the passage of state constitutional amendments in more than a dozen states last fall.

Until recently, California was advancing steadily and democratically toward gay marriage. From 1999 to 2003 the state Legislature added annually to the benefits and responsibilities conferred on gay couples. By the beginning of this year, California's domestic partnerships offered gay couples legally much of what marriage offers. Those democratic gains for gay couples induced only a statewide yawn.

Recently, however, a state judge in San Francisco threatened that progress by declaring the state's marriage law unconstitutional. Unless the decision is reversed by the state's highest court, as I expect it will be, California too will face a possible referendum banning gay marriage. And that referendum might be broad enough to eliminate not just gay marriage, but much or all of the painstaking legislative progress already made.

Connecticut has so far followed a wiser path. However, even in Connecticut this progress is threatened by a pending lawsuit challenging the state's marriage laws. It might be fair to say that judicial victories have primed the legislative pump in Connecticut and elsewhere. Even so, more such judicial pump-priming just now will only fuel a backlash not just in Connecticut but further kindle the fire consuming gay-marriage advocates across the country.

There's something about representative democracy that makes even losers accept the legitimacy of the result. There's something about courts that makes losers want to dump tea in Boston Harbor. Incremental steps to gay marriage are necessary, but the steps can be large. No state has yet authorized gay marriage by legislative action. That suggests that almost everywhere progress will have to be made piecemeal. In California, the legislative pace has been glacial in some years, lightning fast in others.

While incremental legislative steps toward gay marriage are often necessary, they can sometimes and in some places be very large. By recognizing civil unions, Connecticut has taken a huge leap to gay marriage. It will now be

easier, in just a few years, to argue that granting Connecticut's gay civil unions the legal and social dignity of "marriage" poses no threat to society.

In this respect, however, the Connecticut model has limited application. Polls showed that 56 percent of the state's residents already favored civil unions. That level of support may be present or quickly obtainable in most of the northeastern states. Beyond those core states, any legislative progress will have to be much slower. For example, Illinois should probably be on the slow track.

Compromise. Reform movements need both idealists and pragmatists. Without idealists, the pragmatists have no idea where to go. Without pragmatists, idealists have no idea how to get there. The early years of the gay marriage struggle have necessarily been dominated by idealists, people who shared the revolutionary thought that gay couples should be allowed to marry. Now that this idea has been implanted in the political culture, and has awakened a fierce resistance, it's time for a season of pragmatism.

Pragmatism means compromise. If we stamp our feet and demand marriage, and nothing less, we will get nothing. That was initially the stand taken by Love Makes A Family, the Connecticut group supporting marriage equality. The group opposed civil unions as "separate but equal" and a "dead end" that would never lead to gay marriage. Yet the state Legislature was unready for gay marriage, and even getting civil unions required a reaffirmation of the principle that marriage is for "one man and one woman."

After universal criticism in gay circles, Love Makes A Family pragmatically ended its opposition to civil unions. The legislation then passed. Now even the group's president admits that civil unions are not a dead end, but part of a "conversation about marriage equality [that] will continue." ▼

Dale Carpenter is a law professor. He can be reached at OutRight@aol.com. Some of his past columns can be read at www.indegyforum.com.

Gay bills

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referendum to overturn Proposition 22.

Thomasson's group has vowed to put a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage on the ballot in 2006. Leno and supporters of the bill maintain Proposition 22 has no impact on marriages performed inside California.

The fight over whether state lawmakers have authority to enact gay marriage may become moot if the state Supreme Court upholds a lower court ruling that in effect overturns Proposition 22. In March a superior court judge in San Francisco ruled that California's marriage laws discriminate against gay couples and are unconstitutional. Antigay groups have vowed to appeal that decision, which is on hold until higher courts resolve the matter. The lawsuit, which combined six dif-

ferent cases, evolved out of Mayor Gavin Newsom's decision last February to order city officials to marry same-sex couples.

Last spring the judiciary committee passed a similar bill to AB19 but Leno shelved the measure after it was clear he did not have the votes to pass it through the full Assembly. This year Leno has said he is confident he can get his bill out of the Assembly and to the governor by late summer. The Assembly Appropriations Committee will next hear the bill and is expected to approve it.

Fair campaigns

On Monday, April 25 the full Assembly passed by a 47-27 vote a pro-gay change to the state's code of fair campaign practices introduced by Speaker Pro Tem Leland Yee (D-San Francisco/Daly City). In a rare showing of bipartisan support, two Republicans joined the 45 Democrats present to approve the bill, AB866. Sponsored by Equality California, the mea-

sure prohibits the use of any negative appeal based on prejudice against LGBT people by candidates or campaign committees who sign the voluntary pledge provided for in the Code of Fair Campaign Practices.

"With today's Assembly vote, we move one step closer to ending antigay rhetoric in political campaigns," said Yee. "Candidates should not discriminate and victimize the LGBT community for political purposes, and fostering campaigns that create fear and intimidation only incite a potentially dangerous situation for the LGBT community."

Gay advocates have long argued that antigay rhetoric, which often comes in the form of political hate messages, is directly connected to violence against gay and lesbian individuals. Incidents of violence against LGBT people have peaked in national election years, such as in 2004 during the presidential campaign, in which

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Multiple personalities

By Jane Warner

1 8th and Sanchez, April 16, 7:14 p.m.: While on routine patrol, a police cruiser pulled up behind a red Mustang stopped at a stop sign. The officer checked the "hot sheet," a list of stolen vehicles in the city, and noticed the Mustang was listed. The officer effected a traffic stop and the driver was taken into custody. The officer pulled a driver's license from his front pocket. "That's me," the suspect stated, "I live in Berkeley." A check, however, revealed the individual listed on the license reported being a victim of robbery in August of last year. When confronted with this information the suspect refused to explain. A further search of his belongings discovered several other pieces of identification, as well as numerous credit cards and money orders. On the way to the station house, the officer noticed the suspect acting fidgety in the back of the patrol car. When they arrived, the officer searched the back seat and found a wallet on the floorboards. Inside the wallet were yet more identification cards belonging to several other people. The suspect, 33, was booked for auto theft, possession of stolen property, false identification to an officer and a no bail warrant.

Unwelcome guest

4100 block of Diamond, April 16, 12:45 a.m.: After leaving a babysitting job in Noe Valley, a woman was frightened by a man

who followed her. Quickening her pace, the woman reached her car, got in, and locked the doors. As she turned to see where the stranger was, she was surprised to see he was standing next to her window. "Open the car door, or I'll shoot," he stated, and pointed a silver handgun at her face. Afraid for her life, the woman slid across the seat and dialed 911 on her cell phone. The gunman walked around the hood still pointing the gun through the window and then fled on foot before getting into a white compact. The suspect was last seen fleeing in the vehicle eastbound on 23rd Street. After hearing the radio broadcast, a motorcycle officer saw the vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed with its headlights off toward the 101 freeway. Other police vehicles joined the pursuit and chased after the suspect southbound on Bayshore Boulevard. After winding through the Bayview neighborhood and running several stop signs, the suspect lost control of his vehicle and crashed near Kirkwood and Newhall. The suspect jumped from the stalled vehicle and fled on foot while officers gave chase. A short time later, he was found hiding underneath a parked pickup on Innes Street and taken into custody. The suspect, 24, was taken to Mission Station where he was booked for attempted armed robbery, criminal threats, reckless

driving, evading a police officer, and parole violation.

Guardian angel

Castro and Alvarado, April 17, 3:46 a.m.: A resident awoke to the sound of breaking glass, looked out his bedroom window, and saw two men rummaging through a parked Ford Explorer. As he dialed 911, the resident watched as the suspects broke a window on a blue

Honda and then searched its contents. As they broke the window of a third vehicle, a police cruiser turned the corner. Both suspects started running in different directions as the officers gave chase on foot. After a short distance, one of the suspects was found crouched

down behind a parked car. When ordered to put his hands up, the suspect refused. Officers wrestled the suspect to the ground and took him into custody. Nearby were a pair of black gloves, a screwdriver, a small pocket flashlight, and two car stereos. The 30-year-old was booked for auto burglary, possession of burglary tools, and resisting arrest. A search of the area for the other suspect, described only as a male, was unsuccessful. ▼

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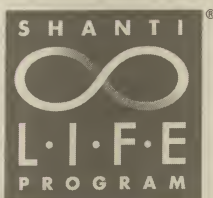
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Newsom taps gay man for health panel

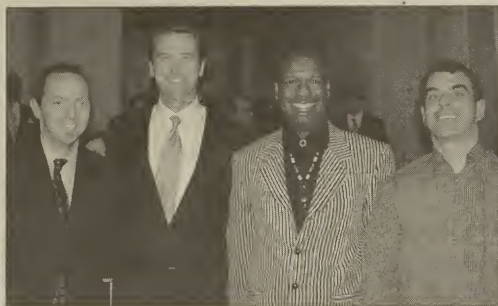
by Matthew S. Bajko

With the appointment of Dr. Donald Eugene Tarver II to the city's health commission, three LGBT people now serve on the advisory committee to the city's public health department.

Tarver, a clinical instructor at the University of California San Francisco who maintains his own private practice, Tarver Psychiatric Care, was sworn into office April 13 and took part in his first meeting Tuesday, April 19. He joins James Illig, Project Open Hand's director of government relations, and Roma Guy, an instructor and program associate in the health education department at San Francisco State University, the two other openly gay commissioners.

"I am very honored and thrilled to be joining the other esteemed commissioners," said Tarver, a city resident since 1987. "It was or is a position I had not sought but apparently reflects upon the regard that various public citizens and representatives of behavioral health programs have expressed on my behalf. I am thrilled."

Tarver, who is African American and single, turned 45 on Tuesday, April 26. He is believed to be the first psychiatrist to serve on the health commission and is most certainly the first voice in some time for mental health providers, who routinely find their services and programs the first to be cut during lean budget years.



From left: Supervisor Bevan Dufty, Mayor Gavin Newsom, Health Commissioner Dr. Donald Tarver II, and Health Director Dr. Mitch Katz.

"For me a key aspect is how my professional expertise can be incorporated into safeguarding the interests particularly of behavioral health clients," and ensuring there is a safety net there for them, said Tarver. "If I am partisan in any way it is in respect to mental health and substance abuse services and maintaining public funding to those essential services."

Tarver replaces Michael Penn, who stepped down from his seat on the commission September 27, 2004. Penn, who is also black and a doctor, gave up his seat because his job with Genentech had him traveling and missing meetings.

In announcing his selection to fill Penn's vacant seat on the commission, Mayor Gavin Newsom pointed to Tarver's dedication to advancing public healthcare policy and providing managed clinical services as a community psy-

chiatrist, with particular focus on people of color, sexual minorities, gender minorities, and the indigenous.

Illig said he is "overjoyed" with Tarver's joining the commission.

"It makes three of us on the commission who are openly gay. The community should be proud," said Illig. "As frustrating as it has been to wait so long to have that seat filled, it is a sign of this mayor's commitment to finding the right people."

Illig also said it will be valuable to have Tarver's opinion and expertise in the mental health field as the state prepares to disburse funding from Proposition 63. Voters passed the measure last year which places a 1 percent tax on individuals with taxable income over \$1 million, with the money going to mental health programs throughout the state. San Francisco

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Dunlop moves to HRC

by Cynthia Laird

After an eight-year stint on the San Francisco Redevelopment Commission — and some public spat with former Mayor Willie Brown — Mark Dunlop has been appointed by Mayor Gavin Newsom to serve on the Human Rights Commission.

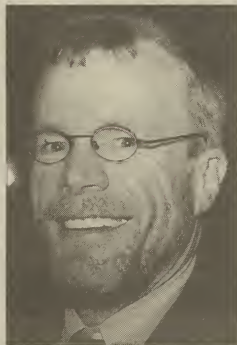
Dunlop, 51, was sworn in Tuesday, April 26; his first meeting is expected to be today (Thursday, April 28).

"Although I have loved my work at the Redevelopment Commission, I am looking forward to this new challenge," Dunlop said in an e-mail to the *Bay Area Reporter*.

Dunlop, who is openly gay and HIV-positive, replaces Vernon Grigg, who resigned his seat on the commission last year to run for supervisor in District 7; he did not win that race. Dunlop joins lesbian Pat Norman and transgender Cecilia Chung as the commission's LGBT representatives.

Dunlop said his tenure on the Redevelopment Commission should serve him well in his new role.

"There are many overlapping issues in regards to the Human Rights Commission and the Redevelopment Commission," Dunlop said. "Certainly all San Franciscans, regardless of birth status, economics, religious choice, etc. should have equal access to decent affordable housing, an issue that



HRC Commissioner Mark Dunlop

challenges both commissions. As an out gay man living with HIV disease, I am fully aware of historic and current economic and social discrimination in terms of lack of access and of course, verbal and physical violence."

He also thanked Newsom for appointing him. "I am particularly excited to be appointed by Mayor Newsom, whom I believe has a deep found belief in equality, justice, and equal access for all people."

In his position on the Redevelopment Commission, Dunlop served for several years on the city's HIV Health Services Planning Council, which prioritizes federal Ryan White CARE Act funds. In the fall of 2003, however, Brown nixed Dunlop's reappoint-

ment to the Care Council, after what he perceived to be a snub by Dunlop. That incident, as related by Brown's then-press secretary P.J. Johnston to the *B.A.R.* at the time, involved an alleged statement Dunlop made that the mayor shouldn't appoint commissioners to the redevelopment agency. For his part, Dunlop said he spoke out in favor of the Board of Supervisors holding a hearing to determine whether it should take control of the redevelopment agency, and did not say that Brown should not make commissioner appointments.

Dunlop also sparred with Redevelopment Commissioner LeRoy King, who was accused several years ago of making homophobic and AIDSphobic comments; King denied the allegations.

Dunlop has been active in various political campaigns over the years and co-founded the Haight Ashbury Community Services in 1981, a food program in the Haight. Former Mayor Art Agnos appointed Dunlop to the Citizens Committee on Community Development in 1991 and in 1996 he was appointed chair. In this capacity, he helped numerous innovative AIDS services to be awarded federal block grants, and advised on community development needs in areas such as Bayview Hunters Point, Chinatown, the Mission, and the Tenderloin. He was also involved in the early work of the LGBT Community Center. ▼

COMMUNITY NEWS

Supes committee holds pot club hearing

by Liz Highleyman

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors Government Audit and Oversight Committee met Monday, April 25 to begin the process of hashing out new rules for medical cannabis dispensaries (which city officials are now calling MCDs). A capacity crowd of patients, dispensary owners, and interested neighbors was on hand to express their concerns and offer their opinions about how to regulate the city's medical marijuana operations, which currently number about 40.

Mayor Gavin Newsom called for limits on MCDs in March after one tried to open on the ground floor of a hotel that receives city funding through the Care Not Cash program. On March 29, the supervisors unanimously passed an emergency ordinance placing a 45-day moratorium on the opening of new cannabis operations, intended to give the city time to develop long-term regulations.

"This buys us a little bit of time to launch a deliberate process, a public discourse, so citizens can weigh in on the development of new laws," said Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi, who sponsored the moratorium and called this week's hearing. He reiterated Monday that the board has no intention of banning medical cannabis.

Last Thursday, Newsom proposed a set of regulations for the board's consideration. These would require that MCDs notify



Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi

neighbors and obtain approval from the city's Planning Department; locate at least 1,000 feet from schools, youth centers, and parks, and at least 500 feet from other similar operations; ban the use of alcohol on the premises; institute "good neighbor" policies and grievance procedures; limit advertising to healthcare settings; ensure that only qualified patients and caregivers receive cannabis; and make their records available so city officials can verify that they are operating on a not-for-profit basis.

San Francisco's efforts are part of a statewide trend. According to Americans for Safe Access, more than 30 cities and counties have temporary moratoriums on new MCDs, about 15 have regulations imposing numerical caps or prox-

imity restrictions, and four have permanent bans. Last winter Oakland passed a law setting a limit of four MCDs in a downtown district then known as "Oaksterdam" for its proliferation of pot clubs. Berkeley allows no more than three. On Monday, ASA filed a lawsuit against the city of Fresno, arguing that its permanent ban on dispensing is an unlawful barrier under state law SB420.

"Without the means of growing it themselves or finding a caregiver to do it for them, dispensing collectives may be a patient's only legal option for obtaining medical marijuana," said ASA's Kris Hermes.

Deputy City Attorney Rick Scheinfeld began Monday's hearing with an overview of the status quo. SB420, passed in 2003, set minimum requirements for the operation of MCDs, clarifying the state's 1996 Compassionate Use Act (Proposition 215); localities may, however, impose more stringent regulations. SB420 imposes limits on how much cannabis an individual may possess and says that cannabis dispensaries are not authorized to operate on a for-profit basis. The state law also forbids smoking cannabis – but not dispensing or other methods of ingestion – within 1000 feet of a school or youth center.

Pursuant to SB420, California is in the process of instituting a statewide medical cannabis patient ID card, similar to the one already issued by San Francisco. The

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Parole board nixes freedom for Rosenkrantz

by Ed Walsh

Finding that he is an "unacceptable risk to public safety," the parole board slammed the door on gay prisoner Robert Rosenkrantz this week.

On Monday, April 25, the Board of Prison Terms decided that Rosenkrantz should be denied parole. The hearing was held on California Men's Colony prison near San Luis Obispo where Rosenkrantz is serving time.

The hearing took up much of Monday afternoon and the decision was reached after about an hour of deliberation, according to BPT spokesman Tip Kindel.

In 1985, Rosenkrantz shot and killed a schoolmate, Steve Redman, outside Redman's home in Calabasas, in Los Angeles County. Days before the shooting, Redman physically attacked Rosenkrantz on the night of his high school graduation and later outed him to his father. After fleeing to Northern California, Rosenkrantz eventually turned himself in. He was found guilty of second-degree murder, allowing him to eventually be eligible for parole. Jurors in his case rejected the prosecution's request for a first-degree conviction.

The parole board's finding that Rosenkrantz is a public safety risk is contradicted by psychiatric



Robert Rosenkrantz

evaluations by the Department of Corrections that concluded that he is an ideal candidate for parole. Rosenkrantz's parole has also been strongly endorsed by the detective who arrested him, the judge who presided over his case, and Redman's late grandmother.

In 2000, Redman's family formally opposed parole stating in a letter that Rosenkrantz should not be allowed freedom without serving the minimum of his 17-years-to-life term, which would have been in 2002.

With "good-time" credits, Rosenkrantz has been eligible for parole since 1996.

Rosenkrantz's fight for parole has been tied up in the courts for

nearly 10 years. Two superior court judges and two appeals court panels independently ruled that Rosenkrantz has been illegally and unfairly denied parole. Those rulings called for the parole board to set a release date. But the state appealed each of those rulings before he could be freed. The state finally won in 2002 when the California Supreme Court gave then-governor Gray Davis a free hand in blocking parole.

Rosenkrantz's case became a cause celebre for prisoners' rights advocates during the Davis administration. In his five years in office, Davis approved the parole of only eight of the 294 prisoners whose release was approved by the parole board. The board, whose members are appointed by the governor, has a very strict record and only authorized parole for about 1 percent of eligible prisoners.

So far, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has not had an opportunity to review Rosenkrantz's case. Before this week, Rosenkrantz's most recent parole hearing was held in January 2004. The parole board voted against his release, so it never went to the governor's desk.

Schwarzenegger has taken a much more liberal stance. Since taking office in November 2003, he has allowed at least 81 convicted murderers to be released on parole. Rosenkrantz's next parole hearing will be in a year. ▼

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SLDN looks to Swedish military for advice

by Matthew S. Bajko

His ship the HSWMS Carlskrona docked at the Port of San Francisco over the weekend, Lieutenant Commander Lars Enander planned to see the sights as any tourist to the city would. On his agenda: a ride on the fabled cable cars, Alcatraz Island, a wine tour to Napa and, if time allowed, a visit to the Castro.

Included on his itinerary was also an invitation-only cocktail reception with members of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network at the home of the group's board member Julian Chang. A high-ranking officer in the Swedish Navy, Enander came to talk about serving as an out gay man in his country's armed forces.

"I am openly gay on board. My commanding officer knows," said Enander, 47 and single, in an exclusive interview with the *Bay Area Reporter* Friday, April 22.

Enander's visit with local SLDN members is the latest in a four-year relationship between gay members of the Swedish military and the U.S. organization for current and former gay military personnel. As SLDN increases its advocacy work around ending the U.S. military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy toward gay service members, the group is gaining inspiration from the experiences of the Swedes.

"The international community is so far ahead on the U.S. with their policies toward gays in the military. The Swedish com-



Lieutenant Commander Lars Enander of the Swedish military, right, talks with SLDN Executive Director Dixon Osburn at a reception in San Francisco Friday, April 22.

manders have said there are not enough gay people who are out in the military," said Dixon Osburn, SLDN executive director, who came to San Francisco last weekend in order to meet Enander.

Osburn pointed out how America will soon be the last country in NATO to ban gays from serving openly in the military. In order to join the European Union, NATO member Turkey must drop its ban. Even Russia, which is looking to join strategically with NATO, allows gays to serve, said Osburn.

"It just goes to show how the U.S. policy is so anachronistic and archaic," he said.

Osburn said SLDN's ties to the Swedes have been growing for the

last three years. Two years ago SLDN invited the Swedes to speak on a panel in San Diego, while last year the group's legal director went to Stockholm during gay pride at the invite of HOF, the Swedish group for homosexual, bisexual, lesbian and transsexual members of the armed forces. In May, the leader of the group, Leif Olson, is visiting SLDN chapters in America.

"Momentum is building to reverse DADT," said Osburn, whose group introduced a bill in March in the U.S. House of Representatives to repeal DADT, the first time such an attempt has been made since the policy went into effect in 1993. "More people are dismayed at how this is hurting our military

and the country."

As a guest of the U.S., and with Swedish Embassy officials already nervous about Olson's visit this spring, Enander agreed to talk to the *B.A.R.* about his own personal experience in serving in the military while declining to comment directly about America's policies.

Enander has served in the Swedish Navy since 1977 and came out publicly in 2002. Unlike the U.S. military, which prohibits gays and lesbians from serving openly in its armed forces, Enander said that Sweden has never had rules directly against gays and lesbians serving in its armed forces.

"Our authorities encourage people to serve," said Enander, who

first came to accept his homosexuality in 1996. Stationed in a small village on the Baltic Sea island of Gotland, Enander said he did not know any other gay people.

That all began to change in 2000 when Olson, chair of HOF, wrote a paper about gays in the Swedish armed forces and in December 2001, held a press conference with the supreme commander who pledged his full support to gay servicemembers. By 2002, Enander agreed to give an interview with the Navy's newspaper, in which he publicly came out. His crew had known since the spring of 2000.

"I had no problem at all," he said.

Enander said he credits his country's liberal attitude toward gays to, of all things, MTV's *Real World* series, which has portrayed openly gay people in a positive light and been on the air in Sweden since 1996.

"This started debates on TV. In a few years' time things changed very much. Suddenly it was more popular to say I am gay or to be bi and go to gay clubs," he said.

When he first boarded the Carlskrona last September, Enander said his sexuality from the start has been a non-issue with his crewmates.

"I didn't tell anyone. I assumed everyone knew," he said. "After a month, people asked how do you feel about being gay and if I thought it had pushed back my career. I definitely don't think it will be a problem being gay in the military." ▼

Jesse Brannen/Globe

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Hayward hosts anti-hate march

by Zak Szymanski

Inspired by the documentary project that has created a national movement of local communities responding to bias crimes, "Not In Our Town," a march and rally against hate, will take place in the East Bay city of Hayward on Saturday, April 30.

The action is from 1 to 3 p.m. and is organized by Hayward's Lighthouse Community Center youth group and the political action committee Gays and Lesbians Organized for Betterment and Equality.

Charlene Shores, president of GLOBE, said that local youth were inspired to hold a march after viewing the PBS broadcast of *Not In Our Town: Northern California*. Originally a 1995 documentary

about a community in Montana, *Not in Our Town* has become a national movement that encourages communities to organize against hate crimes. The project combines PBS broadcasts and educational tools to inspire grassroots events. The most recent documentary profiled various communities around California as they responded to hate crimes in their towns and cities, and included scenes from Newark, where transgender teenager Gwen Araujo was killed in 2002.

"The youth wanted to do a march against hate, and they approached us and asked for our help," said Shores. "Hayward is near where Gwen Araujo was murdered, which is why we chose the site, and we chose the date because it is in between the PBS broadcast and the date for the new

trial."

Araujo's alleged murderers were tried in Hayward last year, but the case ended with a mistrial. The case is set to be re-tried next month.

Shores said that organizers have invited several community groups to join the march, but that other than LGBT participation, response has been slow.

"We're trying to get a broad based coalition of religious and community organizations to march against hate. It's a challenge for some people. A few people wanted us to take out the gay and lesbian stuff and tone it down so other groups would join, and that's wrong," said Shores. "But this will open the door, to have some kind of dialogue where other groups can discover our humanity."

Some churches and synagogues have agreed to participate, noted Shores, and local politicians will be on hand to speak at the rally. Assemblyman Johan Klehs (D-San Leandro) will present a state resolution in support of the march, as will Hayward city officials, she said. And of course, several gay-straight alliances and youth groups will be out in full force.

Saturday's event will meet between Hayward City Hall, located at 777 B Street, and the nearby Hayward BART station at 1 p.m. Participants will then march to the Hayward Library for a rally.

The event is an inclusive stand against all forms of hate.

"Discrimination based on race, color, religious belief, national origin, sexual orientation, gender and gender identity/expression is not tolerated here in Hayward," said a mission statement about the march. "Therefore, together we will stand against any form of hate."

For more information, call (510) 538-9722. ▼



GLOBE's Charlene Shores is helping organize Saturday's rally in Hayward.

Tarver

◀ page 12

co could stand to receive \$50 million under the funding.

Despite what Tarver sees as 18 years of budget cuts to mental health, he commended past health officials for doing what they could to protect such services.

"I am confident. San Francisco has continued to work despite its budget deficits to provide quality services at a higher degree of funding and programmatic support than communities elsewhere in the state and nation," said Tarver. "That is something San Francisco can not only truly be proud of but must endeavor to sustain."

In addition to his private practice, Tarver also works with many volunteer organizations, such as Baker Places and AIDS Healthcare Foundation Magic Johnson Clinics, and serves as senior physician specialist at Community Behavior Health Services in San Francisco and as a psychiatric consultant for the Department of Public Health's Southeast Health Center.

In 1997 Tarver coauthored with Gianna E. Israel a book on transgender care and recommended guidelines to help both medical providers and clients learn about proper treatments and mental health approaches. Tarver drew on his experience as program coordinator for the gender identity program at the Center for Special Problems, a civil service mental health clinic in the city he worked at in the early 1990s.

"In the context of my role there I did an initial research survey that saw a tremendous void even in generalized information on many issues affecting transgender persons," said Tarver. "Most of all primary professional guidelines at that time were not sufficiently reflective of the consumers or client involvement and choice."

In 1992 he helped found and later served as co-chair of Lesbian and Gays of African Descent for Democratic Action, or LGADDA. He also helped to form the black caucus of the Harvey Milk LGBT Democratic Club.

In 1995, Tarver added his name to a call for action letter to the progressive black community to raise concerns about "an alarming absence of national leadership in black lesbian, gay, transgender and bi-sexual communities. Currently no such movement exists in this country." The letter also served to "spark a national dialogue on launching a progressive black les/bi/trans/gay movement. We

acknowledge that there is no cohesive movement because there has been a lack of community building, leadership development and agenda setting."

He received his bachelor of arts in biology from Harvard University, and his medical degree from the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. ▼



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SJSU hosts Transgender Awareness Week

By Zak Szymanski

A star-studded lineup of activists, professionals, writers, and performers will be featured at the Transgender Awareness Week and Symposium, held from May 3-5 at San Jose State University.

San Francisco's own Jamison Green, former head of San Francisco's FTM International and recent author of *Becoming a Visible*

Man, will give the keynote address at the symposium, while San Francisco Human Rights Commission investigator Marcus Arana will serve as an emcee and workshop leader.

Panelists include Travis Gardner, an activist/educator and openly transsexual member of the rodeo circuit; Tyler Fong, president of the San Francisco Boys of Leather and former Mr. Transgender San Francisco; Cecilia Chung, the first Asian and first transgen-

der woman president of the San Francisco LGBT Pride Celebration and current member of the city's Human Rights Commission; and Julie Marin, a San Jose police officer who transitioned from male to female on the job.

Local artists round out the events, with a film by Aidan Crawford, and performances by Storm Florez, Julia Serano, Miriam Sachs, and Frootie Flavors.

Transgender Awareness Week was actually created around the award-winning photo exhibit by graduate student Jana Marcus, said Dr. Susan Murray of SJSU's sociology department. "Transfigurations: The Making of a Man," will show during the same week.

"We didn't want the topic of this important photographic work to get lost among the MFA art exhibits," said Murray, "so we took the opportunity to expand the dialogue of gender and issues facing the transgender community to a campus-wide level of learning and community building."

Transgender Awareness Week seeks "to place the transgendered experience into a context by which it can be readily understood," according to a statement from SJSU's Web site, which encourages attendance by everyone, particularly non-transgender in-



Marcus Arana

dividuals. "Transgendered and other gender variant people live and work in our communities. They are your students, colleagues, employees, administrators, friends, and family members."

Symposium events are Tuesday, May 3 in the Martin Luther King Library, beginning with Green's keynote address at 2 p.m. and an "Introduction to Transgender Issues" workshop led by Arana. At 3:30, Crawford's documentary *Just a Boy* will be shown, and a 4 p.m. panel features Chung, Fong, Gardner, and

Marin. Green will sign copies of his book at 5, and the photo exhibit by Marcus will follow in Gallery 3 of the Art Building.

Transgender events are also happening all week on campus.

"Opening The Gender Box: Stories of FTM Transformations" presented by Reed Singer and others is on Monday, May 2 in Dudley Moorehead Hall, room 354, from 2 to 4 p.m. The movie *Different for Girls* plays in the Mosaic Center of the Student Union from 6 to 8 that night.

Wednesday, May 4 is "Transgender Health 101" presented by Peer Health Education, a discussion from noon to 1 p.m. in the Almaden Room of the Student Center. From 5 to 7 that night, the movie *Boys Don't Cry* will play in the Costanoan Room of the Student Union.

On Thursday, May 5 from 6 to 8 p.m. is "Trans/Form: an evening of spoken word and performance about the transgender community," with the week's featured performers in the Umuunum Room of the Student Union. An open mic will follow.

SJSU's Transgender Awareness Week events are free of charge and open to the public. For more information, visit www.sjsu.edu/transweek.

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Sex workers film fest starts Sun.

by Liz Highleyman

The fourth San Francisco Sex Worker Film and Art Festival will take place next week, May 1-8.

Since its inception in 1998 as a modest film and video showing, the festival has evolved into a full-scale arts extravaganza drawing participants from around the world. This year the festival will include an art show, two days of film showings, several educational and political events, and a variety of performances and parties.

"From artists' models to muses, from hetaira to geishas, sex workers have been vital participants in arts communities through the centuries," said festival director Carol Leigh (a.k.a. Scarlet Harlot), "despite the lack of recognition and acknowledgement from 'polite society.'"

The event celebrates the talents of sex workers of every gender, sexual orientation, race, age, and economic class. "This festival boasts some of the most fabulous queer and trans performers in the Bay Area," Leigh noted.

The 2005 festival kicks off Sunday, May 1, with an opening gala and "After Hours" art exhibit to benefit the St. James Infirmary clinic for sex workers. Presided over by Mistress of Ceremonies Sister Kitty Catalyst, the evening will feature performances by Kitten on the Keys, Tallulah Bankheist, and the Debbsys from Australia, as well as guest artists including porn luminary Annie Sprinkle. The party runs from 7 to 10 p.m. at Epicenter Gallery (398 11th Street).

Monday's main event is a workshop on harm reduction for sex workers, presented in conjunction with the St. James Infirmary and the Tenderloin Aids Resource Center. Harm reduction experts — including Donna Safiotti, Maria Chavez-King, and Naomi Ackers — plus local community members will discuss



Carol Queen

models for providing compassionate, empowering services for people in the sex industry. The forum takes place May 2 from 1 to 4 p.m., also at Epicenter.

A new event this year, "Whore College," is a full day of classes and workshops for sex workers and their communities, including self-defense, safer oral sex, marketing and legal issues, webcam techniques, and a "sex business makeover" with Annie Sprinkle. Whore College participants will "graduate" with a diploma in sex work studies. Workshops run from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Epicenter.

On March 5, the Sex Workers Outreach Project hosts a forum on "Human Rights, Prostitution, and the Role of Government." Local politicians including former state Senator John Burton and international sex worker advocates including Janelle Fawkes of Australia's Scarlet Alliance and Wang Fang Ping of Taiwan's Coalition of Sex Workers and Supporters will discuss decriminalization of prostitution and related issues. The forum runs from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at City Hall. Space is limited; see the festival Web site to register.

Also on Thursday, festival attendees will have the opportunity to take a champagne cable car tour of San Francisco's "Barbary Coast" red light district and learn about the history of prostitution in the city.

That evening there will be a launch party for the new web journal "Boa: New Whore Culture," featuring performances and readings by sex worker artists and activists including Mattilda (Matt Bernstein Sycamore) and Kirk Read. The party starts at 7:30 p.m. at Femina Potens (465 South Van Ness).

Next Friday and Saturday, the festival continues its tradition of presenting a diverse selection of features, documentaries, and short films by, for, and about sex workers. Films will be shown in several programs from 2 p.m. to midnight on May 6 and from noon to midnight on May 7 at the Roxie Cinema (3117 16th Street).

This year's offerings address issues such as sex workers' rights and organizing efforts, global sex work, health and harm reduction, sexual identity, and — of course — plenty of sex. Selections include *The Naked Feminist*, *Other People's Mirrors*, *Stripped*, *Gansters*, *Porn Star Pets*, *Amazing World of Orgasm*, and *Dick Ho: Asian Male Porn Star*.

Friday's line-up includes "Cops, Condoms, and Handcuffs," an examination of government crackdowns against sex workers featuring live appearances by Canal Street Madam Jeannette Maier, *Cop to Call* girl author Norma Jean Almodovar, and local activist Robyn Few. At 10 p.m., renowned sexpert Carol Queen will present an excerpt from her live performance piece *Peep Show*, followed by a midnight showing of queer and fetish porn produced in the Bay Area.

The festival concludes Sunday night, May 8 with grand finale burlesque show featuring Lipstick Conspiracy, Big Burlesque, Harlem Shake, David Sterry, Shawna Virago, and many more at SomArts (934 Brannan). ▼

For more information, including additional events, registration, and ticket sales, visit www.bayswan.org/swfest.html or call (415) 751-1659.

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12/02

NATIONAL NEWS

Pentagon conflicted on sodomy statutes

by Bob Roehr

Pentagon lawyers are proposing to change the military's sodomy statutes to bring them more in line with current civilian laws and the Supreme Court's 2003 decision that threw out state sodomy laws, according to an April 21 account in the *New York Times*.

But the ink had barely dried on the newsprint before the military backtracked. Responding to a question at a regular Pentagon briefing later that day, spokesman Lawrence DiRita said that consensual sodomy will "continue to be a crime" as it is a threat to "good order and discipline" within the armed forces.

According to the initial article, lawyers in the office of the general counsel were proposing changes in Article 125 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice that would decriminalize consensual sex. Acts with minors and those involving force would remain illegal.

Those modifications mirror changes in society, civil law, and the Supreme Court's decision in *Lawrence v. Texas*. The changes also are in line with recommendations made by a panel of senior retired military lawyers in 2001. They would have to be implemented by an act of Congress, which generally adopts changes in regulations that the Pentagon puts forward.

Most observers have seen the current sodomy provisions of the UCMJ as a serious impediment to gays serving in the military as they



SLDN legal director Sharra Greer

maintain the presumption of engaging in illegal acts. While Article 125 applies to both heterosexuals and homosexuals, it has been applied selectively and generally in a discretionary manner against gays.

Sharra E. Greer, director of law and policy for the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, said the recommended changes came after two years of study by military lawyers. They also reflect the fact that military courts of appeal have overturned two consensual sodomy convictions in light of the *Lawrence* ruling.

There is a suggestion that the Pentagon's reversal, as expressed by DiRita, represents a triumph of political considerations over matters of law, at least for the short term.

"Pentagon leaders cannot run and hide from the Constitution,"

Greer said. "If they truly believe that they can ignore the *Lawrence* decision and that the prohibition on consensual sodomy remains valid, they must be asked: Why did they recommend that Congress repeal that prohibition if they remain confident that it is legal and constitutional?"

Momentum continues to build for repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," the antigay policy that precludes gays and lesbians from serving openly in the military.

The story of Robert Stout, 23, an Army sergeant wounded in Iraq and awarded the Purple Heart, has drawn extensive coverage in the media. He acknowledges that he is gay and wants to continue to serve but he faces the threat of being jailed and discharged from the Army for having said that he is gay.

This has prompted many newspapers to write editorials calling for repeal of the policy. Among them are the usual suspects of the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, but also some unexpected publications, such as the *Charleston Gazette* in West Virginia.

In California, out lesbian state Senator Christine Kehoe (D-San Diego) last week introduced a resolution calling for repeal of DADT. It follows a similar resolution in March by the New York City Council but is the first to be considered by a state legislature, according to SLDN. Equality California, the state's largest LGBT civil rights organization, sponsored the resolution. ▼

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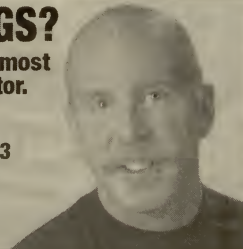
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Gay marriage simmers in D.C.

by Bob Roehr

A Washington, D.C. gay couple who married in Massachusetts has asked if they might file their city taxes as a married couple. The city attorney tentatively has said yes, in a story that first broke on April 20 in the *Washington Post*.

A conservative U.S. senator, who controls the city's budget, wasted no time in threatening the city if it does allow the couple to file a joint tax return.

Edward G. Horvath, 54, and

Richard G. Neidich, 64, are both federal employees who have been together for 25 years. They married in Somerville, Massachusetts on June 25.

This spring they sought advice from the city tax office as to whether they could file a joint return as a married couple. They believe that they are married and that filing as individuals would be committing perjury, lying, on their signed tax form. The matter was passed on to the city's attorney for an advisory opinion.

On April 14, D.C. Attorney General Robert J. Spagnoletti,

himself gay, advised that "validly married same-sex couples may file a joint D.C. Form 40" tax return, while the city retains the right to determine the validity of that filing.

The validity of the marriage remains a legal question mark because Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney has asserted that a seldom-enforced 1913 law precludes out of state couples from marrying in Massachusetts if the laws of their home state do not allow such a marriage.

A legal challenge to the 1913

page 23 ►

ALWAYSTAN

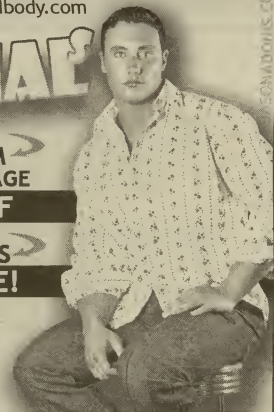
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amounts to discrimination. He said state laws require bars to ask for a second ID if the first one is not valid.

"It is not a defense if the ABC finds a minor in your business and you say 'I was afraid of being called a racist for asking for a second ID.' That doesn't fly with them," he said, referring to the state Alcoholic Beverage Control agency.

The city agency also found that Natali, prior to the numerous complaints filed against him last June, used hiring practices that discriminated against African Americans and "removed from the bar" a black woman on "false charges." The HRC concluded that due to such discriminatory behavior, Natali had violated San Francisco Police Code Article 33, which states it is unlawful for any person to discriminate against another person in hiring or admission to a public accommodation based on that person's race or sex.

In approving her staff's report, HRC Executive Director Virginia Harmon said Natali's actions are "inimical to the public welfare"

and "impede social and economic progress for the entire citizenry." She concluded, "The discriminatory practices discussed [in the report] diminish our city and are contrary to its goals and policies."

Members of the group And Castro for All, which brought the charges against Natali, hailed the report as a "landmark decision" during a rally Tuesday night in the Castro and announced they will begin a boycott of the bar at 9 p.m. Saturday, April 30.

"It is sad we have to be celebrating something like this. But discrimination does happen," said Don Romesburg, a spokesman for the group, standing in front of a sign reading "Civil rights are worth more than a drink, say no to racism and discrimination." "We will never again allow a bar owner to go for five years in discriminating against black people in employment and patronage. Your time is over. It is in the past."

Natali, who has repeatedly denied the allegations and defended his business practices, did not respond to requests for comment. Through his lawyers, Natali issued a statement alleging that the HRC could not find "one single person who could confirm a single allegation against Badlands" or himself.

He also charged that the complaints are the result of "public relations consultants" who tried to block his purchase of the Pendulum, the Castro's only bar catering to African Americans. He charged that the complainants only brought forth their charges after a Superior Court judge denied a motion by a competing buyer to block the sale of the Pendulum.

Melbostad said that Natali is "very upset and disturbed" by the commission's findings. He pointed out that Natali has operated bars in the Castro for 15 years, and prior to this, there has never been any complaints filed against him.

"To me, if you consider that Les has served approximately 100,000 customers a year over a five-year period he has operated the bar, there were only eight complaints, and really, three they found merit to. To me that does not demonstrate a practice of discrimination," said Melbostad. "Badlands has not engaged in racial discrimination and does not engage in racial discrimination."

Badlands bartender Damon Reiter said it has been a hard eight months for the staff and for the bar's customers.

"We have to accept it," said Reiter. "All of our customers know the truth. Our African American customers have supported us all along."

During the rally, which drew about 300 people to Harvey Milk Plaza, speakers singled out Melbostad, chanting "shame on you" and called Natali's statement "two pages of garbage."

"What the HRC did today is not really a secret. It is something that has been talked about for a long time," said Julius Turman, the complainants' attorney. "It gives full voice to the fact that discrim-

ination diminishes our whole community. Not just blacks, not just Asians, not just Latinos, but all of us."

Because he is not a city contractor, Natali cannot appeal the findings before the HRC's public body. He can appeal directly to HRC director Harmon to reverse her decision and has two weeks to file a request. Additionally, HRC does not have the power to issue fines or take other punitive steps against the bar.

The findings against Natali mark the first time in the history of the HRC that it has found a Castro business to be discriminatory. The Midnight Sun faced similar allegations in the early 1990s but was able to resolve the issue through mediation. As detailed in the report on the Badlands charges, mediation failed in this instance because neither side could agree to terms setting out the mediation.

The HRC's report also outlines frustration on the part of commission staff with Natali and his lawyers who repeatedly missed deadlines, postponed mediation dates, and failed to provide the HRC with all the documentation it requested. The report dryly states, "The commission's requests for documents... were not met in a timely manner."

Larry Brinkin, with the HRC, said the Badlands matter is one of the largest cases the commission has handled in the public accommodations realm. The commission interviewed dozens of customers, former employees and current employees at Badlands, as well as current and former employees at the Detour and the Patio Café, a former restaurant Natali operated.

Brinkin declined to speak about the findings or the HRC's investigation but did say, "Issuing findings at the commission is very rare. We usually mediate to resolution and we always try that first."

Along with facing a boycott of

his business, Natali also faces the possibility of losing both his liquor license and entertainment licenses at not just Badlands but at the Pendulum and the Detour. And Castro for All members intend to ask the city's Entertainment Commission to revoke Natali's permits at his bars and are already pressuring the city's planning department not to issue building permits to Natali, who plans to remodel the Pendulum.

The group is also pressing the state Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to revoke Natali's liquor licenses. The ABC has launched its own investigation into the charges against Natali. ABC spokesman John Carr said Wednesday he had yet to receive the HRC's report and was "reserving comment at this time."

As for when the ABC would complete its investigation, Carr said, "I don't have a timeframe for you when that investigation will be complete."

Barry Strike, an alcoholic beverage law specialist with Himman and Carmichael whom Natali hired, said it might be some time before the ABC concludes its work.

"They want to make sure they have an opportunity to talk to all witnesses the HRC spoke to. They will have a hearing with the respondent before anything would happen to Les Natali's license," said Strike. "A hearing has not been scheduled and there will only be a hearing if the ABC finds any reason to issue an accusation against Mr. Natali, which they have not done." ▼

Full disclosure: Mr. Natali has been a client of Goldstein Gellman Melbostad Gibson and Harris for well over a decade. The firm's representation of Mr. Natali is unrelated to Paul Melbostad being general counsel to the Bay Area Reporter.

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Patient Assistance Program is available

Pot clubs

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city's Department of Public Health began offering the cards in 2000; about 8,000 individuals now hold cards, one-quarter of whom are authorized caregivers. The cards include a photo and a randomly generated ID number, but no name. The DPH currently does not keep patient information on file, but with the institution of the state card system it will be required to do so.

San Francisco has no existing laws specifically regulating marijuana dispensaries, growers, or doctors who issue recommendations. Based on a 1997 interpretation of the city's zoning ordinance, MCDs may locate in neighborhood commercial districts and industrial areas, but not residential zones. While there is no specific permit for a MCD, zoning administrator Larry Badiner said that all businesses are required to file for a change-of-use permit when they occupy a building; only two of the existing MCDs have done so. The Planning Department was in the process of notifying dispensaries about the requirement when the moratorium passed last month.

"This is not a punitive process," said Badiner. "I believe most MCDs want to comply with the law, but they may not have known about the law."

As the number of MCDs has exploded in recent months, the department has received increasing complaints about marijuana odor, noise, litter, loitering, dou-

ble-parking, and street reselling of cannabis near some of the existing dispensaries. "I've seen a change over the past year in the quantity of MCDs and how they are received in the neighborhoods," Badiner said.

Options

The supervisors could pursue a variety of options, including an outright ban, grandfathering existing operations (perhaps giving them a time limit to obtain necessary permits and comply with new laws), a permanent moratorium on new MCDs, allowing delivery and over-the-counter sales but no on-premises use of marijuana, discretionary review by the Planning Commission, a cap on the total number of MCDs, and various proximity-based zoning restrictions.

Maps drawn up by the Planning Department show that most sites in the city are within 1,000 feet of a school or other youth facility, park, drug treatment center, or supportive housing facility. "It would be very difficult under these rules to locate many medical cannabis dispensaries," Badiner concluded.

Some four dozen speakers offered testimony before the committee, comprised of Supervisors Mirkarimi, Sean Elsbernd, and board President Aaron Peskin.

Former District Attorney Terence Hallinan expressed concern that requiring MCDs to obtain permits and keep records could expose them to federal prosecution. The federal government bans the sale, possession, or use of mar-

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Speed task force

◀ page 1

HIV resistant to most AIDS medications.

In San Francisco, health officials estimate between 12 to 20 percent of the 60,000 gay and bisexual men in the city have used crystal. Highs from the drug can range anywhere from six hours to three days depending on how much a person does. Most alarming to HIV prevention officials, meth can increase men's sexual desires along with relax their inhibitions, leading to unsafe sex.

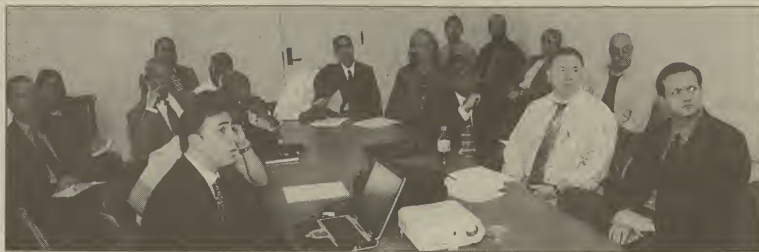
"That means 7,000 to 10,000 people are using this drug," said Steven Tierney, HIV prevention director for the health department who is co-chair of the task force. "HIV and STD infections are related to crystal use."

Michael Siever, Ph.D., director of the Stonewall Project, a harm reduction agency that works with gay and bi men addicted to speed as well as counsels partners and friends whose loved ones abuse the drug, said speed use is not a new problem.

"This has been a huge problem for years," said Siever, who has worked on the issue for 15 years and is a member of the task force. "We need to figure out how to get a handle on it. Meth is the fastest growing drug in the country in all communities."

San Francisco has been especially hit hard. In announcing the new task force, Newsom pointed to the fact that the city is one of the most drug-addicted cities in the nation. Ranked on a per capita basis, San Francisco is number one when it comes to emergency room visits due to crystal use, number two in hospitalizations from LSD, and number four in heroin-related visits to the ER.

Last year, STD officials added ER visits due to speed to their monthly reports in order to highlight the issue. In 2004, 595 men and 147 women went to San Francisco General Hospital's ER due to meth. As of the March 2005 re-



The city's new crystal methamphetamine task force held its first meeting Tuesday.

port, 111 men and 19 women had already gone to the ER due to meth this year.

While Newsom admitted the city does not know how to solve the problem of speed use, which has been a concern for the gay community for at least a decade, nonetheless he said, "nowhere in the nation are we more resolved" than in San Francisco.

In the last year alone, the city has directed more resources toward agencies working with speed users and launched a new treatment method called PROP for men who want to quit using meth but not through intense counseling. Both the health department and the Stop AIDS Project launched new crystal campaigns

to change gay men's notions that crystal is a safe party drug, while at the same time new crystal users anonymous meetings and a Web site have formed.

Duffy said the task force would not only address speed use within the gay community but on a city-wide basis. The drug has made its way into the city's African American community as well, said city officials.

"This drug does not discriminate," he said. "We are seeing it in the suburbs and among straight people. Everyone needs to be at the table."

But Survive AIDS member Michael Lauro blasted the task force for lacking representation from the recovery community and for city officials not allocating

more funds to fight the problem.

"What needs to happen is a redirecting of funds from well-intentioned campaigns that are now obsolete, like the Healthy Penis campaign, into programs to help people addicted to crystal," said Lauro. "What about having a hotline for meth like we have for HIV? We need stand alone programs for HIV-positive people who are using speed and we should fast track them into treatments so they don't spread the disease."

Others applauded the formation of the task force, saying speed use impacts the community on many levels and new approaches are needed. Paul Moffett, president of the Merchants of Upper Market and Castro business group, said he

would like to see MUMC be involved with the task force.

"It impacts our customer base but also our employees. I personally had to part ways with at least three employees because of their speed use. It is really hard," said Moffett, who owns PO Plus.

First meeting

After its first meeting, where members introduced themselves, the task force decided to form three committees tackling treatment issues, combining criminal justice approaches with public health strategies, and prevention issues.

"This is not a committee that is going to sit around and do a lot of talking. The mayor said he wants us to do something," said Tierney.

Newsom promised that the task force has the full backing of his administration, and while he acknowledged the city's budget deficit makes it hard to fund new programs, he remains confident money can be found to implement the task force's proposals.

"I wouldn't be here if I thought this was only a photo op," he said. "As soon as the task force comes up with recommendations, we will try to find ways to fund them. Good ideas generate resources. With good ideas, money tends to follow." ▼

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Gay bills

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lesbian and gay issues played an unprecedented role at both the national and local levels.

"This bill red flags candidates and campaign committees to think twice before using antigay rhetoric as a campaign tactic," said Equality California Executive Director Geoffrey Kors. "We hope this bill strikes a chord in the minds of candidates to be thoughtful and culturally sensitive to the constituencies they hope to represent."

In 1996, then-Assemblywoman Sheila Kuehl (D), an out lesbian and now a state Senator from Santa Monica, introduced nearly identical legislation that failed in its first committee hearing on a 3-4 vote. The registrar of voters is required to provide candidates a blank form on which to subscribe to the Code of Fair Campaign Practices, and a copy of the Elections Code provisions at the time of a declaration of candidacy, nomination papers, or any other paper evidencing an intention to be a candidate for public office are issued. Subscription to the Code of Fair Campaign Practices is voluntary. Completed forms are to be filed with the registrar of voters, and are retained for public inspection until 30 days after the election.

AB866 now heads to the state Senate. If approved it will go to the governor's desk. ▼

Microsoft

◀ page 1

fore" the meeting with Hutcherson to limit corporate activity this year to state legislation which is "directly related to our business." She said the company was "disappointed" that various reports have been "misrepresenting" the meeting between Hutcherson and Microsoft. She said the company, in fact, rejected Hutcherson's requests that Microsoft oppose the gay civil rights bill and fire the two employees who testified for it.

She declined to identify which Microsoft officials met with Hutcherson or to identify any other legislation that the corporation chose to be "neutral" on in this year's legislative session. Begasse also noted that, "on a statewide basis, we've never lob-

bied" for or against the gay civil rights bill, although she did acknowledge that the company did "sign a letter" in support of the bill last year.

Award rescinded

But the fallout around Microsoft's neutrality on the legislation has been swift and harsh.

The Gay & Lesbian Center in Los Angeles has asked the corporation to return its "Corporate Vision Award" presented to Microsoft in 2001. The award was presented to Microsoft at the center's 30th anniversary event in recognition of the company the center said "set the highest standard for others by exhibiting leadership and vision in advancing the cause of GLBT equality." It was accepted by Microsoft's first openly gay executive at the company, Ben Waldman.

Lorri L. Jean, executive director of the L.A. Center, said Microsoft had long supported the Washington state legislation and that its decision to take a neutral position was particularly "alarming because it came after meetings with a local extremist religious leader."

"Their protestations of wanting to remain 'neutral' are incredible," said Jean. "Silence in the face of bigotry and discrimination can in no way be viewed as 'neutrality.'" Such silence, said Jean, "essentially constitutes agreement with the status quo of it being legal to discriminate against GLBT people in the state of Washington."

"But when such silence is the result of a change in position," she said, it clearly reflects just that — a change from the previous position in favor of nondiscrimination

and equality."

One vote short

The Washington State House had passed the gay civil rights bill in February, but the state Senate vote came up one vote shy on Thursday, April 21, voting 25-24 against it. Equal Rights Washington, a statewide gay lobby group, noted that the 25 no votes included two Democrats and all 23 Republicans.

It's the Republican vote that convinces Equal Rights Washington that Microsoft's neutrality did have a negative impact on the Senate vote. While the bill has never been on the Senate floor before for a vote, Equal Rights Washington Executive Director George Cheung noted that "we had two to three Republicans ready to vote

with us, if they were free to vote their conscience." But, said Cheung, Republican Senate Minority Leader Bill Finkbeiner, who represents the district where Microsoft is headquartered, "put a lock on the Republican Caucus," which forced them to vote against the measure.

"When Microsoft took a neutral position, they backtracked, and that gave more cover to Finkbeiner to lock up his caucus," said Cheung. Cheung said Equal Rights Washington has invited Microsoft officials to a gay community town meeting on May 5 "to explain their position."

"It does seem odd," said Cheung, "given their strong history of equal rights for their employees, that they would cave into a conservative preacher." ▼

CUAV

◀ page 2

to-female transgender people reported being victims of crimes last year, a 12 percent decrease that corresponds with a 33 percent decrease in reports of anti-LGBT offenses by police officers and law enforcement. CUAV credited the decline in part to the creation of the Transgender Police Task Force, a joint effort by the Human Rights Commission and the San Francisco Police Commission, as well as the approval and passing of standard transgender training and accountability for all San Francisco police officers.

There was a 78 percent rise in female-to-male transgender victims reporting bias crimes, and a 143 percent increase in bisexuals reporting crimes. Victims reporting their

sexual orientation as "unknown" or "questioning" also increased, from 20 in 2003 to 59 in 2004.

Many times, noted CUAV, "unknown" is selected "when an individual's self-identity does not conform to established terms, like LGBT," including people who are questioning, queer, genderqueer, and trans/transgender without identifying as FTM or MTF or transsexual.

Many anti-LGBT incidents could be directly linked to San Francisco's historic same-sex marriages, which exposed hundreds of people at a time to public harassment and intimidation. During that time, CUAV documented 18 incidents of antigay marriage backlash/gay-bias in the form of e-mail death threats, hate crime vandalism to private residences, harassment, intimidation, and workplace discrimination. The number of Asian victims reporting hate crimes increased in 2004, mostly because of a rally opposing same-sex marriages organized by Chinese Christian conservative leaders and attended by pro-LGBT Asian community members.

Local incidents of violence included crimes by strangers as well as "pick up" crimes.

In July 2004, a young white male perpetrator and another suspect yelled hate speech toward a group of five queer women and one transgender man in the South of Market district. After the second suspect left the scene, the perpetrator continued harassing the group and then physically attacked them. Although he attempted to flee, the perpetrator was successfully detained by the transgender man who held him until police arrived. Victims sustained injuries, including a broken nose, black eyes and injuries around the head and face. Several witnesses came forward during proceedings and the defendant pleaded guilty to two counts of felony hate crime.

In August 2004, a white or Latino male contacted an Asian gay man under the pretense of receiving a professional massage. Once inside the man's residence, the suspect impersonated an undercover cop and pulled out a gun. He used a rope to tie the victim's hands and ankles, then sexually assaulted and robbed him. The case remains unsolved.

Perhaps the most tragic example of a pick-up crime was the 2004 murder of Tony "Delicious" Green, an African American transgender woman who was found brutally beaten, raped, bound and gagged at the Francois Hotel on August 13, 2004. Although evidence suggests that Green may have known her attackers, hate crimes often involve offenders that a victim knows intimately or briefly, and authorities "have been slow to recognize that bias-based assaults do often occur

between two parties that know each other," according to a statement from CUAV.

At Tuesday's press conference, Green's sisters expressed dismay at the fact that police investigators are labeling the murder as a "robbery gone bad" rather than a hate crime. Two men imprisoned on other charges have been named in arrest warrants for Green's murder, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported earlier this month.

Others in attendance at the press conference called for the passage of two pieces of legislation to aid hate crime victims.

Yvette Balderas and Mariah Sparks, survivors of the 2002 "Drag King contest assault" outside of SOMA's Studio Z, said that victims should be given more time than currently allowed under law to file civil suits against their attackers.

"Many survivors in our position feel that justice is a misnomer," said Sparks. Jack Broughton, who attacked both women and pleaded guilty to the crimes after more than a year of court proceedings, was given probation and is free to walk to the streets. "I was not able to pull together emotionally in time to file my civil suit."

AB378, by Assemblywoman Judy Chu (D-Monterey Park), would extend the statute of limitations for recovering damages from an attack, from one to three years.

Chris Daley of the Transgender Law Center noted the community's outrage at defense tactics that essentially put local transgender teenager Gwen Araujo on trial for her own murder. The case ended in a mistrial last year and is scheduled to be retried next month. AB1160, by Assemblywoman Sally Lieber (D-Mountain View), would prohibit the use of "gay panic" and other non-legal defense tactics employed specifically to play off the bias of jurors.

Community awareness and response to hate crimes is encouraging, said CUAV survivor advocate Tina D'Elia. While D'Elia said anti-LGBT incidents are genuinely on the rise, she also believes that the higher numbers of incidents reflect better reporting of such crimes.

"It's not good news that incidents are up, but it's good news that people are being more diligent about recognizing what constitutes an anti-LGBT incident," said D'Elia. "Every time I see the numbers I realize we are chipping away at getting more of the reality of these situations. People are getting it, that whether they are being called 'faggot' on the street, or receiving death threats for getting married, these are all incidents we are trying to document." ▼

The full report about anti-LGBT incidents in 2004 can be found at www.ncavp.org.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Academy of Friends announces grants to HIV/AIDS groups

by Tyson Gillfillan

San Francisco AIDS fundraising funnel, the Academy of Friends, announced today (Thursday, April 28) that its February 27 Oscar night gala raised half a million dollars for area HIV/AIDS service organizations. AOF has designated \$462,500 in agency grants to gala beneficiaries, which will be given out at an awards ceremony to be scheduled next month. The rest of the money funds AOF's awards, which are donated to a charity of the awardee's choice.

This year represents a \$50,000 increase over 2004 grants, and marks nearly \$5.5 million given to Bay Area AIDS charities since the group's inception 25 years ago. The funds are raised primarily through individual underwriting, corporate sponsorships, and gala ticket sales, and are complemented by challenge grants, raffle ticket, and silent auction sales.

"With government funding for AIDS service providers... shrinking so dramatically these days, we are relying on our community partners like Academy of Friends more than ever," said Bill Hirsh, executive director of the AIDS Legal Referral Panel, a regular recipient of AOF grant money.

According to AOF Executive Director Elisabeth Loeffler, 36 organizations submitted proposals for funds, of which 14 were chosen by a panel of medical and community advisers to receive grants this year. New groups, including Catholic Charities CYO, Contra Costa-based Pittsburg



"Silver boys and girls" – life-size replicas of Oscar – were part of the Academy of Friends' 25th anniversary gala in February.

Pre-School and Community Council, and health service providers Magnet and the Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic were among the beneficiaries chosen this year.

The beneficiaries weathered the application and screening process, requesting grants for specific HIV/AIDS support programs. Final grant allotments were based on the original dollar amounts requested by the organizations, and the total funds raised by AOF.

"The \$40,000 grant from the Academy of Friends will help Magnet expand our rapid HIV testing program," said Executive Director Steve Gibson of the Castro health clinic for gay men. "And as a relatively new organization, being honored by the Academy of Friends helps identify us to other donors and foundations that we are an agency of merit. People no-

tice that AOF stamp of approval."

In addition to the beneficiary grants, AOF has designated \$5,000 for the Kyle Ozier Award, given to honor an individual's exemplary spirit of community volunteerism; \$1,500 for the Jay Luque Award, given to an individual with demonstrated dedication to the AOF; \$21,000 for the 2005 Holiday Fund, given in December to Bay Area HIV/AIDS organizations who need extra assistance to meet year-end commitments; and \$10,000 for the Emeritus Fund, a special donation by previous AOF board members in honor of the event's 25th anniversary.

The Kyle Ozier award was presented to David Slocumb in honor of his longtime support of the AIDS Emergency Fund, which will receive the award money in Slocumb's name.

"David has been one of our

most extraordinary volunteers for 20 years," said AEF Executive Director Mike Smith. "He has been a big part of our 'Pennies Project' [an initiative to collect spare change in area businesses for AEF programs] since it began in 1987 and still comes in every Thursday to help count pennies. We are very grateful for David, and for the Academy of Friends award."

New board for 2006

AOF also announced new leadership for the 2006 gala. Leading the executive committee as board chair will be Alan Keith, a member of the organization's board and executive committee for the past two years.

"The HIV/AIDS epidemic is still with us, and as funding sources for the agencies we support have become tighter, we feel our role has become increasingly important," said Keith. "Our continued challenge will be in expanding the level of grant giving to meet next year's need and to grow the number of organizations we can help."

Information on the AOF and its 2005 beneficiaries can be obtained via the organization's Web site at www.academyoffriends.org, or by calling (415) 995-9890. ▼

Kevin Waldron



Kevin Waldron passed away unexpectedly last week following an accident. Kevin was 37. Kevin was originally from Washington, D.C., where he attended Georgetown University and received a B.A. in liberal arts in 1995. Kevin moved to San Francisco in early 1998. He deeply loved his adopted home of San Francisco and planned never to leave. Kevin will be remembered as an eternal optimist who loved life and was delightfully funny. Kevin enjoyed biking, travel, and gardening. We will miss him terribly. Kevin is survived by his life partner, Keith Wetmore, who currently serves as chair of the law firm Morrison & Foerster LLP; his mother, Barbara Greenberg; his father, Melvin Waldron; his stepbrother, Glenn Rooks; and his step-sister, Heather Rooks.

In Kevin's memory, donations may be made to New Leaf Services For Our Community, Attention: Development Department, 1390 Market Street, Suite 800, San Francisco, CA 94102 or the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, File #7263501, P.O. Box 60000, San Francisco, CA 94160.

OBITUARY POLICY

Obituaries must be typed and no longer than 200 words. We reserve the right to edit. If you're submitting a photo of the deceased, write their name on the back. If you include a SASE for the photo's return, write the person's name on the inside of the envelope flap. All obituaries must include a contact name and phone number. Deadline for obituaries is Monday at 5 p.m.

Pot club hearing

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ijuana for any purpose, and maintains that cannabis has no recognized medical use. The Supreme Court is currently considering a federal appeal of a 9th Circuit Court ruling that interstate commerce laws (under which scheduled drugs are regulated) do not apply to not-for-profit cultivation, provision, and use of medical cannabis within a single state; a verdict is expected soon.

"I would advise any clients not to sign any documents regarding the buying or selling of medical marijuana," said Hallinan, who now works as a defense attorney, "or keep any records that could be subpoenaed by a federal agent."

Underscoring Hallinan's concerns, Special Agent Richard Meyer of the Drug Enforcement Administration's San Francisco Field Division was present at the hearing.

Hallinan also said that medical cannabis had traditionally been "regulated underground" due to federal law, noting that as DA he worked with patients, dispensary owners, and the health department to institute the current card system and advised cannabis clubs about maintaining a low profile and good relations with their neighbors.

Most speakers agreed that some MCD regulations are needed. In fact, stated medical cannabis activist Robyn Few, "since 1999 we have been begging for some sort of regulation, some protection for patients, caregivers, and growers." But not everyone

agreed about what form such regulations should take.

Robert Raich, lead attorney in the pending Supreme Court case, argued against a numerical cap or proximity regulations. Congregation of MCDs in a given area – like that of car dealerships – "has benefits for patients," he said, "giving them a wider variety, more competition on price, and making it easier to shop around." He also argued that there are "no good policy reasons" for prohibiting dispensaries near schools. "There is nothing inherently wrong or immoral about students knowing that somewhere in the vicinity people are obtaining and using their medicine," he said.

Leslie Thomas of Patients Health Defense, who uses medical cannabis for multiple sclerosis, emphasized the importance of access for handicapped persons, proper ventilation, and assurance of high-quality products. "A medical facility should be more professional," she said with regard to operations that advertise with garish signs and neon marijuana leafs. "We think medical marijuana should be part of mainstream business community if they are taking money from mainstream consumers."

"Our neighborhood is more like the wild, wild west," countered Laura Weil, a nurse from a part of District 6 that plays host to a concentration of MCDs. "They have opened at record speed with reckless disregard for the neighborhood. I can't walk my son to school without passing at least two. The voluntary model, unfortunately, has failed. The industry now is unfortunately completely

out of control."

Dr. Charles Yingling, a clinical professor at Stanford University Medical School, suggested that MCDs should be regulated not like bars or the coffeehouses in Amsterdam, but like alternative pharmacies.

"The pharmacy model is more appropriate than the pot club model for legal, medical, and public relations reasons," he said. As such, Yingling argued that on-site cannabis use should be prohibited. "Patients don't go to pharmacies to take medicines, but to purchase them," he said.

"I believe our business format and procedures could be a model," said Michael Nolan of the Green Door on Howard Street. His club is one of the two that obtained a permit from the Planning Department, is fully handicapped accessible, offers workers a high starting wage and benefits, provides free cannabis to needy patients, and is proactive in maintaining good relations with neighbors – including giving them a 24-hour phone number to call if they have complaints.

Jim Segal, a patient and merchant from the Haight-Ashbury, offered a more radical proposal. "Let the city stand up to federal government – just like with gay marriage – and open a city-run growing and dispensing operation," he said. "That would take the profit out of it."

The 45-day moratorium enacted in March will expire in mid-May, but is likely to be extended while discussions continue among the board, city officials, and members of the community. ▼

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Team efforts

by Jim Provenzano

News of a recent survey about gays in sports conducted by NBC/USA Network by Penn, Schoen & Berland Associates and published in *Sports Illustrated* spread quickly. Thanks to the more than a dozen folks who alerted me to it.

However, while other news sources eagerly responded to its conflicting conclusions, what few noted was how *Sports Illustrated*—while focusing on a sidebar story about *Ring of Fire*, the documentary about boxer Emile Griffith that aired on the USA Network—chose to interview mostly straight athletes about their opinions of gay athletes.

Nearly half of the survey's respondents think homosexuality is a sin, but more than 70 percent said it's okay for a gay person to compete in athletics. In a series of

articles about gays in sports, Ken Griffey Jr. told *Sports Illustrated* that having a gay teammate "wouldn't bother me at all. If you can play, you can play."

Why not ask GLBT athletes how they feel about being in athletics? Better yet, bring athletes to a place where they can see how strong and diverse our numbers are.

Tracy Baim, editor-in-chief of Windy City Media, and co-vice chair of the Chicago Games, visited the *Sporting Life* exhibit at a recent reception held by the San Francisco Spikes at the GLBT Historical Society in San Francisco. Baim encouraged everyone to come to Chicago next summer for the seventh Games.

Concordant with that, May 14 and 15 will be the days for local teams and anyone else to sponsor a GGVII registration party. Teams around the world are hosting such events to help get people signed up. Over 2,000 paid registered athletes and participants are already planning to go. For more information, visit www.gaygameschicago.org.

Other folks of note to visit *Sporting Life* included the two newest local Federation of Gay Games delegates, current Team San Francisco board members Nelson Luesse and Ross Hayduk. Earlier this month at the meet-

ing of the Team San Francisco Board of Directors, the board agreed that Luesse and Hayduk would represent Team San Francisco to the Federation of Gay Games. Luesse joined the Team SF board in January 2004, and represented Team SF at the FGG annual conference in Cologne, Germany last November.

"Our local sports teams and organizations should avail themselves to the *Sporting Life* exhibit, which is such a terrific venue for fundraisers and team socials," said Hayduk. Both he and Luesse will be the voting voices for local athletes, so your opinions about upcoming events are important to them.

An active bowler in the Gay Games League at Seabowl in Pacifica, Luesse participated in both the Amsterdam 1998 and Sydney 2002 Gay Games. He attended San Francisco's historic Gay Games II in 1986, and was in the festival chorus for both Vancouver 1990 and New York 1994.

Luesse's focus for Team SF is on the athletes' assistance programs for Chicago 2006. Among Team SF's plans is a big event one year before GGVII at the LGBT Community Center.

"We need people to become paid members of Team San Francisco to increase the Athlete's Assistance Fund," said Luesse. "People can assist by joining, and also participate in other Gay Games events."

Hayduk competed in the Sydney 2002 Games with the S.F. Track & Field Club. He's also been a member of Different Spokes SF Cycling Club, SF Fog Rugby Football Club, and SF Power powerlifting team. All of this adds to his graduate studies in sport management at the University of San Francisco.

Hayduk, a Gay Games silver medalist, has served on the Team SF board since January 2001 as secretary, co-chair, and FGG delegate. He also organized the 20-booth "Sports Block" at San Francisco Pride, where many teams benefited from grouping together to promote their activities. The same plans are under way for this year's Pride events.

This is just one of the many efforts by Team SF to get more participation in the GLBT athletics community. Other upcoming projects include the design and sales of Team SF 2006 uniforms.

In order to increase awareness of our growing sports community, Team SF still needs more participation. Hayduk mentioned that they are still looking to fill three positions on the Team SF board with women. Any women who are interested should contact them at www.teamssf.org.

Soft and hard

Earlier this month, several San Francisco gay softball teams com-



Newly elected Federation of Gay Games delegates Nelson Luesse, left, and Ross Hayduk visit the *Sporting Life* exhibit.

peted in the Saguaro Cup Softball Tournament in Phoenix, Arizona, with two teams returning as champions.

The Daddy's Bad Boys (sponsored by Daddy's) finished in first place in the Open Lower C division. The San Francisco F-Liners (sponsored by the Edge) finished first in the Open D division.

SF Gay Softball League Vice Commissioner Curtis Glenn reported that after going 1-3 in pool play, the Bad Boys entered the double elimination tournament as the #2 seed in the Lower C bracket. They then went undefeated into the championship. In a come from behind win, they beat the

Chicago Blaze for the championship trophy.

The F-Liners won their D Division championship the hard way. After losing in the first round of the double elimination tournament, they won seven consecutive games on Sunday and beat the San Diego Gamecocks twice to take home the championship.

Congratulations to all the teams. For more info on weekend and regional softball games, visit www.sfgsl.org. ▼

Read about more special events and athletes at www.sportscomplex.org.

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News briefs

◀ page 4

Sign up for Wilmot bike ride

Less complicated and much shorter than other bicycle rides for charity, Project Inform's 11th annual Ron Wilmot Bike Ride is coming up on Saturday, May 7 and riders are still needed. The fun and energizing seven-mile

ride through San Francisco's Golden Gate Park has become one of Project Inform's important fundraising events and it's easy. All riders are asked to make a \$25 donation to the ride, as well as get sponsors from friends, colleagues, or family members. Cycling teams can also participate, with the goal of raising at least \$5,000.

The event is named after the late Ron Wilmot, an avid cyclist who personally relied on Project

Inform's HIV treatment information to better manage his health.

Staff members noted that 95 percent of money raised goes directly to Project Inform's HIV/AIDS treatment education and advocacy programs.

Next Saturday's event starts with check-in at 9 a.m.; the ride begins at 10. For more information, visit www.projectinform.org or call Julie Doherty at (415) 558-8669, ext. 223. ▼

UPCOMING EVENTS

The bare facts

If you like shirtless soccer players as much as many readers do, stop by the Powerhouse bar, 1347 Folsom Street, tonight (Thursday, April 28) to cheer on San Francisco Spikes team captain Barry Skown (and other candidates, of course, after all it's all for a good cause) in the Bare Chest Calendar festivities. The fun begins at 9:30 p.m.

Irene scene

One of the prime movers behind the early Bay Area sports scene is, of course, Jack "Irene" McGowan. You're invited to stop by to help The Renegades softball team celebrate what would have been McGowan and Harry G. Smith's 54th anniversary of their extraordinary union on Friday, April 29, from 7 p.m. at the Cinch, 1723 Polk Street (between Clay/Washington). (415) 776-4162.

Polo-down

Next week will be polarific as the San Francisco Tsunami polo team hosts its annual tournament, Tsunami de Mayo. Events include water polo teams from almost a dozen U.S. cities competing at the Soda Aquatics Center in Moraga on May 7-8, the fabulous "Splish" party, Saturday, May 7 at Studio Z, 1515 Folsom Street, with water polo finals and the brand new Tsynchro synchronized swim team performing on May 8. For more info and directions, visit www.tsunamipolo.org.

Gay Giants

"LGBT Night Out" at SBC Park takes place Monday, May 9. Enjoy a San Francisco Giants baseball game with lots of other LGBT fans. Over 100 tickets have been sold, but there are still more available. The festivities will start in the centerfield scoreboard plaza with a pregame mixer at 5:15 p.m. Your ticket will include admission to the party, an adult beverage, and a seat in the exclusive LGBT Night Out lower box section. For more information, visit the Giants Web site at www.sfgiant.com/speialevents.

Global Health Service Corps for AIDS needed, report says

by Bob Roehr

The United States should create a Global Health Service to help fight the international AIDS epidemic, according to a report issued on April 19. Such a program would focus on issues of providing and training health care personnel for the task.

The study, "Healers Abroad: Americans Responding to the Human Resources Crisis in HIV/AIDS," was conducted by the Institute of Medicine at the request of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. PEPFAR is a \$15 billion commitment over five years that targets 15 nations containing more than half of the global burden of HIV.

"Human beings are the heart of health care. It is their labor and their intellect that translates science and technology into healing and hope. Just as oils and brushes without painters cannot create art, drugs and diagnostics without

health workers cannot create health care," read the report's opening paragraph.

"The dearth of qualified health care professionals in most low-income countries represents the single greatest obstacle to meeting health care needs," the report noted. Sub-Saharan Africa currently has 25 percent of the world's burden of disease but only 1.3 percent of the world's health workforce.

The most visible element of the proposal is creation of a U.S. Global Health Services Corps to provide specialized skills, accelerate program scale-up, and educate and train local colleagues. The report calls for an initial group of 150 physicians, nurses, and technicians assigned to host nations for a minimum of two years.

Healers Abroad envisions attracting the services of recently graduated physicians through a fellowship program with a salary of \$35,000 a year and repayment of up to \$25,000 a year in student loans. Those incentives are similar

to ones currently used to attract physicians to underserved rural and low-income urban communities in the U.S.

Partner nations would be encouraged to adopt standardized procedures and record keeping in health care. The U.S. would support education and training of health care workers, from village workers through medical schools, through a combination of assistance within those nations and international exchange programs.

The report also noted the "brain drain" of skilled doctors and nurses from many of the nations hardest hit by HIV. They are being lured to developed nations by higher pay and recruitment activities. This practice must be restrained if there is to be any hope of treating large numbers of patients with HIV in Africa, according to the report.

PEPFAR is evaluating the report. Congressional action likely will be required to implement some of the recommendations. ▼

Guest Opinion

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that a code-based system best serves the interests of people living with and at risk for HIV in California, providing needed information on the epidemic without the potential negative consequences that might follow from a name-based approach. There are three primary reasons for our position.

First, we remain concerned that HIV reporting by name could cause some Californians to avoid being tested for HIV altogether. Past research on this issue has varied, but a recent study by the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies at the University of California, San Francisco concluded that name reporting would deter a significant number of Californians who are at risk for HIV infection from being tested. Why risk this prospect if an effective reporting system is available that minimizes individuals' fear about potential loss of confidentiality?

Second, while existing AIDS

and HIV reporting systems have proven to be confidential and breaches have been rare, many individuals at risk for HIV remain concerned that information about their HIV status could be disclosed. The recent example of a health worker in Florida who inadvertently e-mailed a list of 6,500 people with AIDS and HIV to 800 co-workers does little to allay these concerns. Because Florida uses a names-based reporting system, the names of people with HIV and AIDS found their way into unauthorized hands. A code-based system like that operated in California would have made that impossible.

Our third concern about HIV name reporting is that future political pressure could result in the use of names of HIV-positive individuals for purposes well beyond tracking the epidemic. Some have suggested that this data should be used to trace sexual contacts or to prosecute HIV-positive individuals who engage in unprotected sex. Recently, the comptroller in Maryland suggested posting the names of all people who test positive for HIV on the

Internet. One need not have too much of an imagination to wonder where the current political climate might take these proposals. A code-based system provides a valuable safeguard against these prospects.

California has been a national leader in designing effective HIV programs while protecting the rights of individuals with HIV. This is time to maintain that leadership—not a time to succumb to unreasonable demands of the CDC that ignore the fact that code-based HIV reporting is fully consistent with public health needs to track HIV. The hard-fought battle to create an effective code-based system of HIV reporting in California that avoids unnecessary deterrents to HIV testing should not be abandoned prematurely. ▼

Fred Dillon is the director of policy and communications for the San Francisco AIDS Foundation; Dana Van Gorder is the director of state and local policy at SFAF.

Gay marriage

◀ page 17

law is before the courts. Depending on the outcome of that case, it is possible that the marriages of out of state same-sex couples could be voided.

Last year, Spinoletti wrote an advisory opinion as to whether the District of Columbia must recognize same-sex marriages performed elsewhere. However, Mayor Anthony Williams has refused to make that document public. The mayor has said, "We're at a very, very difficult situation because we're not just any city."

All of D.C.'s laws and budget items technically are part of the federal government. They are reviewed by Congress, which often has shown little hesitation in meddling in what are otherwise local affairs. That is particularly true of "hot button" social issues where social conservatives have tried to impose on D.C. what they could not impose on the entire country.

So it was no surprise when

Senator Sam Brownback (R-Kansas) warned of a sharp backlash from Congress if D.C. recognized the gay couple's marriage. The senator recently held the first of what are likely to be several hearings designed to defend traditional marriage. As chairman of the appropriations subcommittee that handles D.C.'s budget, he is in a position to back up that threat.

"The scandal of D.C.—a place with less democracy than Kirkuk [Iraq]—continues," wrote gay pundit Andrew Sullivan on his blog. "The social right has always argued that the people and their elected representatives should be able to decide these questions. To have our lives and the internal workings of our own families dictated by a Kansan who would never win more than a handful of votes in this city is just maddening."

Threats such as Brownback's are one reason why not all LGBT community members in D.C. are jumping on the marriage bandwagon. This is "the political equivalent of sailing down the Potomac River on a flaming barge," said Rick Rosendall, vice president

of the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance.

The venerable and effective nonpartisan political group dates from 1971 and long has urged a go-slow approach when it comes to issues like marriage. It is afraid that a congressional backlash might wipe out D.C.'s domestic partnership registry. That bill was originally passed in 1992 but implementation was stalled by Congress for a decade. GLAA seeks to incrementally add to the scope of that legislation.

Rosendall argues that the incremental approach has resulted in tangible legal and financial protections for gays living in D.C., while the issue of filing a joint tax return is largely symbolic.

A recent analysis conducted by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in Connecticut found that the featured same-sex couple in the analysis would save only about \$20 in state taxes by filing a joint return as opposed to two individual returns. The difference was significantly greater for federal taxes, which gays are not allowed to file jointly. ▼

LEGAL NOTICES

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

INVITATION TO BID FOR SEWER REPLACEMENT AND REPAIRS

Solicitation No. 05-620-IFB-012

The San Francisco Housing Authority will accept sealed bids for Sewer Replacement and Repairs at CAL 1-16, Alameda, San Francisco. Construction cost range is between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Bids are due at 1815 Egbert Avenue, Suite 300, San Francisco, at or before 2:00 PM on Tuesday, May 17, 2005.

Bid documents are available at 1815 Egbert Avenue, Suite 300. A non-refundable deposit of \$50.00 is required for each copy of the bid package. Payment must be in the form of a certified check, cashier's check, or company check payable to the San Francisco Housing Authority. Cash will not be accepted. Call Brenda at 415-715-3210 for solicitation document.

Inquiries regarding this Invitation to Bid should be directed in writing to Ms. Edda Piccini, Project Manager 415-715-3243.

A pre-bid meeting will be held at Ellsworth Street, near Alameda Boulevard at 10:00 AM on Thursday, May 5, 2005. Bidders' attention is called to requirements relating to HUD, Federal Labor Standards, and Federal Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity. Rights are reserved to reject any or all bids.

VACANCY NOTICE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 54974, California Government Code, notice is hereby given of the following unscheduled vacancies. Interested persons may obtain an application form from the Clerk of the Rules Committee, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244, San Francisco, CA 94102-4689. Completed applications should be submitted to the Clerk of the Board. All applicants must be residents of San Francisco, unless otherwise stated. Additional information may be obtained by accessing the City's web site: www.sfgov.org/bdsuprs

Please Note: Depending upon the posting date, some vacancies may have already been filled. To determine if vacancies for this Board/Committee/Commission or Task Force are still available please call the Rules Committee Clerk at 554-5184.

SUNSHINE ORDINANCE TASK FORCE 2000

Seat 4, must be appointed from names submitted by New California Media and be a journalist from a racial/ethnic-minority-owned news organization, for a two-year term ending April 27, 2007.

Seat 8, must be a member of the public who has demonstrated interest in or has experience in the issues of citizen access and participation in local government, for the unexpired portion of a two-year term ending April 27, 2006 (can be designated for a disabled person).

Seat 11, must be a member of the public who has demonstrated interest in or has experience in the issues of citizen access and participation in local government, for a two-year term ending April 27, 2007 (can be designated for a disabled person).

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING INSPECTION BROWN BAG LUNCHES

The Building Inspection Department welcomes you to attend a series of informal, general information talks about topics ranging from the Building Permit Process to legalizing In-Law units. These talks are presented at no charge to the public and City staff on the 3rd Thursday of the month, Noon to 1:30 PM at the Department of Building Inspection. SFGTV will cablecast the Brown Bag Talks on Cable Channel 26. Check the SFGTV website at www.sfgov.org/sfgtv for playback times of these programs.

STATEMENT FILE A-0284424-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: 1.) Frisco California Choppers, 2.) Frisco Leathers, 1490 Howard St. San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by a general partnership, signed Ronald Aiello. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on N/A. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/13/05. **APRIL 14, 21, 28, MAY 5 2005**

STATEMENT FILE A-0284591-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Michael A. Rhea Photography, 1090 Eddy St. Apt. 306 San Francisco, Ca., 94109. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Michael A. Rhea. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 4/14/05. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/14/05. **APRIL 21, 28, MAY 5, 12 2005**

STATEMENT FILE A-0284531-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Baku De Thai, 400 Valencia St. San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Vena Shotive-yaratana. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on N/A. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/13/05. **APRIL 21, 28, MAY 5, 12 2005**

STATEMENT FILE A-0284493-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Rentals InSF, 1318 Hayes St. San Francisco, Ca. 94117. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Jackie Tom. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on 4/13/05. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/13/05. **APRIL 21, 28, MAY 5, 12 2005**

STATEMENT FILE A-0284491-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Coming Out Productions, 186 Commonwealth Ave. #1 San Francisco, Ca. 94118. This business is conducted by an individual, signed Richard Kemp. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on N/A. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/13/05. **APRIL 21, 28, MAY 5, 12 2005**

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE # CNC 05541967

In the matter of the application of Yuen Wang Yu for change of name. The application of Yuen Wang Yu for change of name having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Yuen Wang Yu has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to Peter Wang Yu. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Room 218 on the 9th day of June, 2005 at 9:00 am of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted. **APRIL 21, 28 MAY 5, 12 2005**

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS #310

Dear Potential Applicant: The San Francisco Human Services Agency (SFHSA) is requesting proposals from agencies, organizations, and individuals interested in contracting to provide training for people interested in becoming foster parents. The Agency is seeking a qualified respondent to deliver training through an established curriculum to prospective foster parents.

The contract will be for the period from 7/1/05 to 6/30/07. The amount of the contract will be negotiated with the winning respondent.

An RFP packet may be picked up at SFHSA, Office of Contract Management, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 300, beginning Friday, April 22, 2005. Office hours are from 8:30 AM to 5 PM. RFP packets and subsequent updates will also be available on the City's website. Go to [HTTP://SUNSET.CI.SFCA.US/PBIDS.NSF](http://SUNSET.CI.SFCA.US/PBIDS.NSF) and click on the "Consultants and Professional Services" link.

The Respondents' Conference will be held on Wednesday, May 4, 2005 at 10:00 AM at 1650 Mission Street, Suite 300, SF CA. For further information, call Joseph Huang at (415) 557-5181. Due date for responses is Tuesday, May 24, 2005 at 3 PM.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO FILE # CNC 05541984

In the matter of the application of Chi Wang Yu for change of name. The application of Chi Wang Yu for change of name having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Chi Wang Yu has filed an application proposing that his/her name be changed to John Yu. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered, that all persons interested in said matter do appear before this Court in Room 218 on the 16th day of June, 2005 at 9:00 am of said day to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted. **APRIL 21, 28 MAY 5, 12 2005**

STATEMENT FILE A-0284845-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Lucid Gallery, 508 Sutter St. San Francisco, Ca. 94102. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed Clint Worden. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on N/A. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/25/05. **APRIL 28, MAY 5, 12, 19 2005**

STATEMENT FILE A-0284788-00

The following person(s) are doing business as: Weird Fish, 2193 Mission St. San Francisco, Ca. 94110. This business is conducted by a corporation, signed Peter Hood. The registrant(s) commenced to transact business under the above listed fictitious business name or names on N/A. The statement was filed with the City and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/22/05. **APRIL 28, MAY 5, 12, 19 2005**

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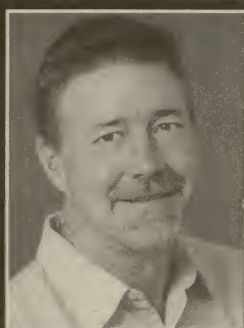


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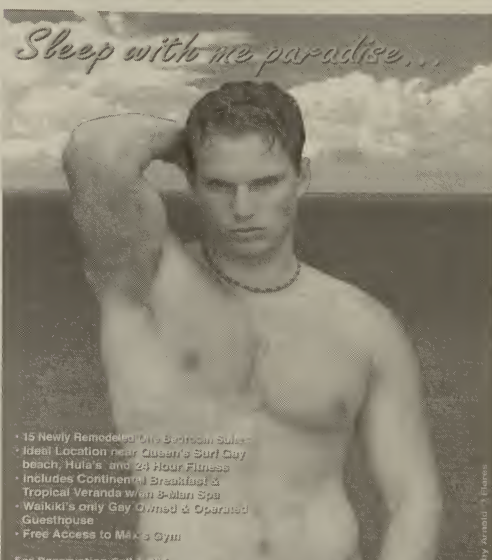
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LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT FILE A-0284711-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: Sterling Ventures, 1388 Haight St. #95
San Francisco, Ca. 94117. This business is
conducted by an individual, signed Sterling
B. Scott II. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on N/A. The
statement was filed with the City and County
of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/20/05.
APRIL 28, MAY 5, 12, 19 2005

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
FILE # CNC 05541994

In the matter of the application of Dennis
Robert Badagliacco for change of name.
The application of Dennis Robert Badagli-
acco for change of name having been filed
in Court, and it appearing from said applica-
tion that Dennis Robert Badagliacco has
filed an application proposing that his/her
name be changed to Dennis Robert Jeff-
erson. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered,
that all persons interested in said matter do
appear before this Court in Room 218 on
the 21st day of June, 2005 at 9:00 am of
said day to show cause why the application
for change of name should not be granted.
APRIL 28 MAY 5, 12, 19 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0284766-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: Belgano Chocolatier & Gelateria, 3901 24th
St. San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This business
is conducted by a corporation, signed Ran-
dall Jensen. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on N/A. The
statement was filed with the City and County
of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/21/05.
APRIL 28, MAY 5, 12, 19 2005

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
FILE # CNC 05541981

In the matter of the application of Melissa
Marie Maggiolo-Smida for change of name.
The application of Melissa Marie Maggiolo-
Smida for change of name having been filed
in Court, and it appearing from said applica-
tion that Melissa Marie Maggiolo-Smida
has filed an application proposing that
his/her name be changed to Alessandra Mel
Vitala. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered,
that all persons interested in said matter do
appear before this Court in Room 218 on
the 28th day of June, 2005 at 9:00 am of
said day to show cause why the application
for change of name should not be granted.
APRIL 28 MAY 5, 12, 19 2005

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STATEMENT FILE A-0284528-00
The following person(s) are doing business as:
John Griffin Photography, 1072 Folsom St.
#400 San Francisco, Ca. 94103. This busi-
ness is conducted by an individual, signed
John Griffin. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
tious business name or names on 4/13/05.
The statement was filed with the City and
County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/13/05.
APRIL 28, MAY 5, 12, 19 2005

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO**
FILE # CNC 05541995
In the matter of the application of
Jonathan Timothy Bobst-McKay for
change of name. The application of
Jonathan Timothy Bobst-McKay for
change of name having been filed in Court,
and it appearing from said application that
Jonathan Timothy Bobst-McKay has filed
an application proposing that his/her name
be changed to Jonathan Timothy Bobst.
Now therefore, it is hereby ordered, that
all persons interested in said matter do ap-
pear before this Court in Room 218 on the
21st day of June, 2005 at 9:00 am of said
day to show cause why the application for
change of name should not be granted.

APRIL 28 MAY 5, 12, 19 2005
**NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR
CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OF AL-
COHOLIC BEVERAGE LICENSE**
To whom it may concern: The name of the
applicant is/are Olive Food and Drink,
LLC. The applicants listed above are apply-
ing to the Department of Alcoholic Beverage
Control at 71 Stevenson Street, Suite
#1500 San Francisco, Ca. 94105, to sell
alcoholic beverages at: 743 Larkin St. San
Francisco, Ca. 94109.

Type of License applied for:
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PLACE
APRIL 28, 2005

**NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO
SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**
To whom it may concern: The name of the
applicant is/are Western Host INC. The
applicants listed above are applying to the
Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
at 71 Stevenson Street, Suite #1500 San
Francisco, Ca. 94105, to sell alcoholic
beverages at: 125 Third St. San Francisco,
Ca. 94105. Type of License applied for:
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LEGAL NOTICES

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND
FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN FRAN-
CISCO FILE # CNC 05541811

In the matter of the application of Deborah
Anne Marchi-Friel for change of name. The
application of Deborah Anne Marchi-Friel
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Court, and it appearing from said applica-
tion that Deborah Anne Marchi-Friel has
filed an application proposing that his/her
name be changed to Vanessa Deborah
Marchi. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered,
that all persons interested in said matter do
appear before this Court in Room 218 on
the 24th day of May, 2005 at 9:00 am of
said day to show cause why the application
for change of name should not be granted.
APRIL 14, 21, 28 2005

APRIL 14, 21, 28, MAY 5 2005
STATEMENT FILE A-0284199-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: Vietnam Tea Restaurant, 701 Larkin St.
San Francisco, Ca. 94109. This business is
conducted by an individual, signed Katie
Nguyen. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on 4/1/05.
The statement was filed with the City and
County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/01/05.
APRIL 7, 14, 21, 28 2005

LEGAL NOTICES

STATEMENT OF WITHDRAWAL
FROM PARTNERSHIP OPERATING
UNDER FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME: #0280737

The following person(s) has withdrawn
from partnership operating under the fic-
titious business name known as 1.) California
Choppers 2.) Frisco Choppers 3.) Choppers
USA 4.) USA Choppers, located at 1490
Howard St. San Francisco, Ca. 94013.
Name of person(s) withdrawing from part-
nership Raul Villaseñor. This statement
was filed with the City and County of San
Francisco, Ca. on 3/11/04.
APRIL 7, 14, 21, 28 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0283829-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: 1.) T.B.G.L. Photo Album Memories,
2.) Transgender, Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian
Photo Album Memories, 220 Pierce St. #8
San Francisco, Ca. 94117. This business is
conducted by an individual, signed Felicia A.
Elizondo. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on 3/18/05.
The statement was filed with the City and
County of San Francisco, Ca. on 3/18/05.
APRIL 7, 14, 21, 28 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0284172-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: Mission Bartlett Garage, 3255 21st St.
San Francisco, Ca. 94122. This business is
conducted by a corporation, signed Jose
R. Frego. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on N/A. The
statement was filed with the City and Coun-
ty of San Francisco, Ca. on 3/31/05.
APRIL 7, 14, 21, 28 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0283906-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: Markus Lobl Fitness, 1505 Northpoint
San Francisco, Ca. 94123. This business is
conducted by an individual, signed Markus
S. Lobl. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on 3/22/05.
The statement was filed with the City and
County of San Francisco, Ca. on 3/22/05.
APRIL 7, 14, 21, 28 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0283953-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: ATRI Press, 66 Cleary Ct. #503 San
Francisco, Ca. 94109. This business is
conducted by an individual, signed Mark V.
Rose. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on N/A. The
statement was filed with the City and Coun-
ty of San Francisco, Ca. on 3/23/05.
APRIL 7, 14, 21, 28 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0284448-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: Mission Thrift, 2330 Mission St. San
Francisco, Ca. 94110. This business is
conducted by a corporation, signed Werner
Wernie. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on 9/25/98.
The statement was filed with the City and
County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/11/05.
APRIL 14, 21, 28, MAY 5 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0284307-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: Mediation and Law Offices of Jason H.
Stein, Esq., 225 Bush St., 16th Floor, San
Francisco, Ca. 94104. This business is
conducted by an individual, signed Jason
Stein. The registrant(s) commenced to
transact business under the above listed fic-
titious business name or names on 4/6/05.
The statement was filed with the City and
County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/6/05.
APRIL 14, 21, 28, MAY 5 2005

STATEMENT FILE A-0284364-00

The following person(s) are doing business
as: Peter Young Support Fund, 740A 14th St.
#237 San Francisco, Ca. 94114. This busi-
ness is conducted by a corporation, signed
Andrea Lindsay. The registrant(s) com-
menced to transact business under the above
listed fictitious business name or names on
4/6/05. The statement was filed with the City
and County of San Francisco, Ca. on 4/7/05.
APRIL 14, 21, 28, MAY 5 2005

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page 44

Lennon's tomb
Ex-Beatle paid tribute in
Broadway-bound musical.

page 37



Broadway Bebe
Neuwirth in 'Here Lies
Jenny' at Post St. Theatre.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

BAY AREA REPORTER

Vol. 35 • No. 17 • 28 April 2005

UNDERSTANDING CHARLOTTE VON MAHLSDORF

'I AM MY OWN WIFE' PLAYWRIGHT DOUG WRIGHT GETS INTO HER HEAD

by Richard Dodds

For Doug Wright, the play that became *I Am My Own Wife* was intended to be a hymn to her — her being Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, a former him who had somehow survived the Nazis and East German communists while living openly as a transvestite in Berlin.

"When I first met her, I thought I had found an unsung gay hero," said the playwright, "but heroes rarely work in drama. Human beings make much better fodder for art, and she surely was a conflicted and confusing human being. And that's worth writing about."

Indeed, *I Am My Own Wife* is the biggest success in Wright's 20-year career as a playwright, earning him both a Tony Award and a Pulitzer Prize in 2004. The Broadway production also provided the largely unsung actor Jefferson Mays with a career-making role, playing not only Charlotte but also 34 other characters who passed through her adventurous and, in the end, controversial life.

Mays will be recreating his role, for which he also earned a Tony, when *I Am My Own Wife* arrives at the Curran Theatre on May 3. Mays and director Moises Kaufman (*The Laramie Project*) were so instrumental in the development of the play that they share in the author's royalties if not in the author designation itself.

"It was such a collaborative process that the roles of writer and director and actor all bled together more than any other play I've worked on," said Wright from New York. "But I do feel at the end of the day I maintained enough authorial control and wound up inventing enough text that I'm comfortable with the [playwright] designation."

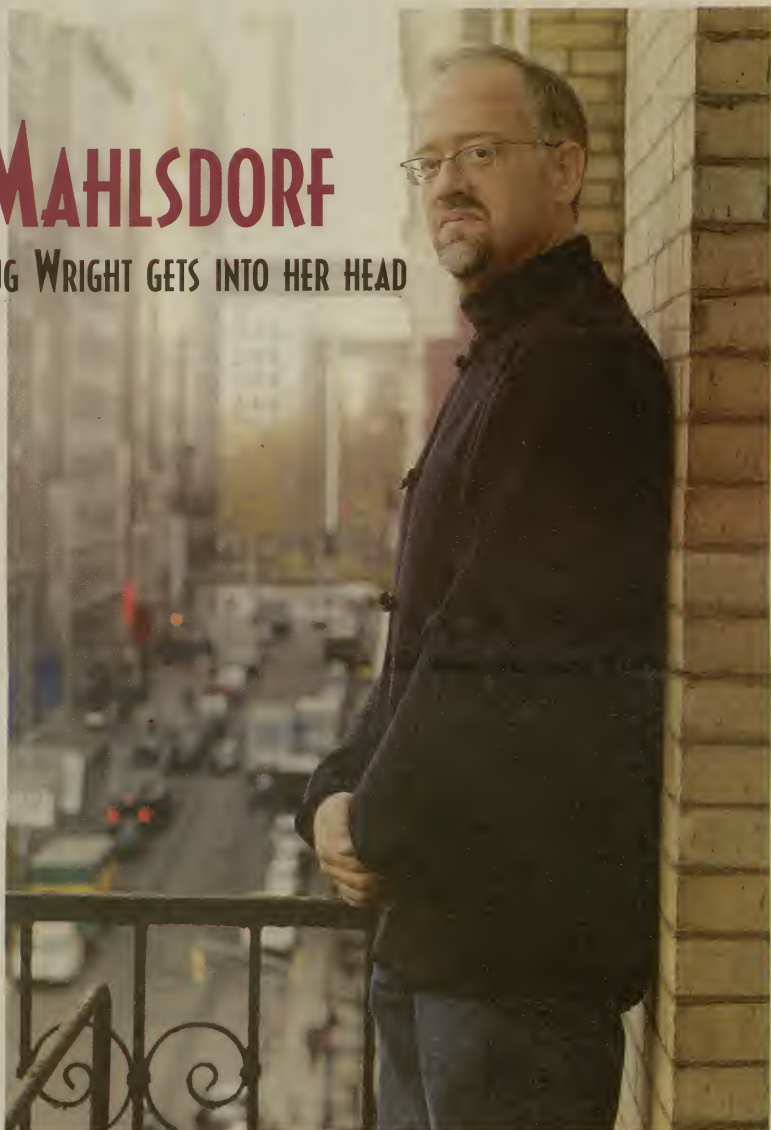
The project was born way back in 1992, when a friend told Wright about this quirky transvestite who ran a museum of 19th-century antiques and curios out of her mansion-like home on the outskirts of Berlin. Before long, Wright had become a commuter to Germany, taping long conversations with von Mahlsdorf before her death in 2002. At the same time, she was becoming a celebrity in her own country when reports that she had been an informer for the East German secret police triggered a backlash.

The hero had become a flawed human being, and Wright, confronted with hundreds of pages of transcribed conversations and a central character with a blackened aura, pretty much gave up on creating a play. He poured his energies into a grotesquely comic work about the Marquis de Sade titled *Quills* that became an Oscar-nominated film starring Geoffrey Rush.

"My mother came out after seeing *Quills* looking a little blanched," Wright recalled, "and she said with a tight smile, 'Doug, I think you've gone a bit over the top this time.'"

But *Quills* provided a higher profile than Wright had previously en-

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Jay and Steven of Y'all
perform in *Life in a Box*.

LOVE & DEATH, CONTINUED

SAN FRANCISCO INT'L FILM FESTIVAL, WEEK TWO

by David Lamble

Some of the SF International Film Fest's best moments come in this final week of scary looks at some interesting lives. The orgy of Argentine film is complemented by a cup of very hot cinema coffee from Brazil.

Life in a Box Welcome to the looking-glass world of gay show-biz. Jay and Steven were lovers, country singers, talented guys whose actual lives became caught up in their act. They called themselves Y'all, and for a decade they pursued impossible dreams: they were going to

have their own TV show, the first gay country-music variety show, they were going to sell millions of CDs. In the end, they lived a pretty good if hardscrabble life on the road. They were written up in *The New York Times*, but the article didn't augur fame or fortune.

Their slightly disappointing life changed suddenly when a third man, Roger (and his dog), suddenly joined not the act, but the relationship. It was now Jay, Steven and Roger. That was wonderful, until it wasn't.

Part *Smother's Brothers Comedy Hour*, part Grand Ole Opry, part gay male *Scenes from a Marriage*, the doc (produced, di-

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SECOND OF TWO SECTIONS

Gay etiquette for the new Dark Ages

Minding your p's, q's and queers with Miss Manners

by Roberto Friedman

Of all the many syndicated columns and features the popular papers depend upon to fill up their column inches, ever-so-polite Out There's indisputable favorite has always been the unfussy "Miss Manners," written by the impeccable etiquetteist Judith Martin. Now a "fresh-



She knows more than you do.

ly updated" new edition of *Miss Manners' Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior* (W.W. Norton, \$35) has arrived on our desk, and OT has spent many an idle moment thumbing through its pages — with white gloves on, of course.

The niceties and no-no's of social intercourse are all here, conveniently organized under headings like, "Table Manners for Particular (and Ornerly) Foods" and, "Electronic Communication (Per-

sonal) — The Itinerant Telephone." There are 858 pages of good advice, dispensed with wit and economy, on all sorts of heterosexual rites. There are charming illustrations (by Gloria Kamen) with amusing captions like, "The Awfuls Consider Becoming Perfect." But a quick consultation of the book's index under "gay" first directs us to "see homosexuals" (oh we do, we do), then offers up only three, count 'em three, etiquette questions which concern us inverts. We present one of them in its delicious entirety:

"Dear Miss Manners,

"What am I supposed to say when I am introduced to a homosexual 'couple'?"

"Gentle Reader, 'How do you do?'"

"How do you do?"

We [heart] Miss M's succinct way of pointing out good sense and common civility. She has the best of manners, leavened by a knowing and very modern sense of humor. For example, the second time gays crop up in a gentle reader's inquiry concerns bedroom assignments when a father's gay son brings his boyfriend along for a weekend visit with the parental units. Gentle Reader explains, "I am unsure if the boys want to share a room, or if this arrangement will be uncomfortable to my wife. I don't want to raise an issue if there isn't one, so my solution is to make up both guest rooms and let my son decide, and let my wife know that this should be our son's decision."

Miss Manners quite wisely replies, "Attempting to direct the

intimate activities of one's adult guests always leads to disaster, even when the hosts are the parents of the houseguests. ... In other words, you can assign people separate rooms, but you cannot insist that they stay in them after dark."

The third and final instance of homos in this annals of manners concerns lesbian partners of 26 years fretting needlessly over their straight daughter's wedding plans. "If mom walks our daughter

down the aisle, how should I as mom #2 enter with the wedding party?"

"How you assigned yourself to be 'mom #2' in this regard, you do not say," Miss Manners replies with equanimity, "but it might also be fitting for you both to give away the bride."

Our favorite non-gay-specific gems of advice include the proper way to eat a slice of pizza. "This may be lowered into the mouth by hand, small end of the triangle first, taking care that the strings of cheese also arrive in the mouth." Yes, please attend to those cheese-strands, we can visualize them and don't want to.

Good advice for us winos, erm we mean "wine aficionados," follows the question, "When wine is ordered 'by the glass' and I have not emptied the glass when another is served, what do I do?"

"Gentle Reader: Have you thought of not ordering a second glass until you have finished the first?"

On the topic of those ubiquitous "itinerant telephones," Miss M observes the tendency of bulletins barked on these phones to be of the very important "Hi, I'm on the bus, I'll be there in 5 minutes" variety. "Miss Manners is astonished that so many people appear to be on parole, and that parole is so strict. It is apparently no longer a question of checking in at set periods, but of not being per-

mitted to make a move without simultaneously reporting it."

Paging through this veritable orgy of good, old-fashioned etiquette has OT day-dreaming about writing our own advice column on the side. "Dear Mister Man [nerd]," our not-so-gentle reader would write in. "When is it proper to interrupt a panicked columnist on deadline in order to exhort him or her to publicize my gay second cousin's upcoming one-man show about growing up asthmatic, Armenian, big-boned and a big sissy in the Northwest Territories, working title: *Yukon?*"

"Gentle Reader: On the 21st of Never."



Newly glammed-out Leanne DeLaria.

DeLaria watch

We hereby note with tempered excitement that lesbian thespian **Leanne DeLaria** is coming to town for a six-night run at the Empire Plush Room, May 17-22. But we also conjecture that perhaps she was scared (or scarred) by the fright-wig and bedsheet she was compelled to wear in the recent 42nd Street Moon production of *Once Upon a Mattress*. Or maybe she's hoping for a long-term record deal as her third jazz CD for the Telarc label, *Double Standards*, is released. The record com-

pany is advertising in jazz and music mags, not gay ones. Demographics say gays don't buy jazz. So Lea gets a hetero glam-over. Pluck those eyebrows! Lay on the mascara! Glue on the false eyelashes! And gloss those lips, baby!



Stewart on gays and St. Patty's.

Irish spring

Cuddly and adorable comedian **Jon Stewart**, quoted at the *Time Magazine 100 Most Influential People* party held at the Time Warner Center in NYC, last Tuesday, April 19:

"Gay people, they want an awful lot. To be able to march in the St. Patrick's Day parade, you know, I mean: come on. Let's face facts, gay people are very flamboyant, and you don't want anything to take away from the dignity of that parade. You know it is very clear — you don't want some gay guy checking you out while you are pissing behind a dumpster."

"We're just now catching up to gayfreetheater.com, an hilarious parody site advertising **The Straight Acting Company**, billed as "Columbus's premier gay-free theater," with the catchy motto, "Straight plays with straight themes performed by straight actors." At least we think

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(OFFICIAL SELECTION, SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL 2004)

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FILM



Harry (Bryce Johnson) and Max (Cole Williams) navigate the pop-star world in Christopher Munch's new film.

Sibling rivalry

'Harry and Max' are brothers and buddies

by David Lamble

Tactile contact doesn't always have to end in orgasm. A wisecracking blonde with boy-band good looks drops this line on his older brother during a long anticipated camping trip. The brothers discuss every neurotic tendency in their upscale, Volvo-driving family. Terms like "Yoga Nazi" and precise instructions for oral sex between men alternate with cynical barbs tossed at the female fans of boy-bands, followed by a tortured monologue on the horrors of circumcision. No, these aren't The Hardy Boys, or maybe they're The Hardy Boys for the New Millennium.

For a critic, meaning someone who watches far too many movies, what distinguishes a good film from a couple of hours you'll never get back is often a memorable scene or two. What distinguishes *Harry and Max*, the taboo-challenging tale of two pop-star brothers who slip-slide between ordinary family feuds and sticky stuff between the sheets, is the character of Max. Cole Williams (son of singer/writer Paul Williams) astonishes as the younger brother who has to learn to be a "big brother" to his cynical sibling Harry (Bryce Johnson). A superficial resemblance to one of the Hansons doesn't hurt, but Williams' real talent is to breathe life into a truly original character who can partially transcend narcissism and regard the act of sex as an extension of friendship, the basis for love.

If there's anything more appealing and more threatening to the mental health of a young queer boy, it's growing up alongside an attractive and possibly too available older brother. If straight people can be divided into guys marrying their moms and gals

seeking a father figure, maybe an equally messy queer-male fantasy involves the potential mate who is the perfect younger or older brother. Several friends have confided that their own first experiences came at the hands of older brothers who grew into straight adults.

Writer/director Christopher Munch has a wicked talent for crafting dialogue that can cause neurotic strangers to tell us their messiest secrets without making us feel bad about how we got to know them.

In a scene from *Harry and Max*, the brothers talk about the origins of their attraction.

"God! Now I feel guilty for making you gay."

"I already knew what I wanted."

"When you were seven."

"Yep."

Spanish fly

In 1992, Munch burst onto the queer film firmament with a short drama based on an intriguing "what if." *The Hours and the Times* imagined an aborted affair between Beatles manager Brian Epstein and John Lennon on a four-day trip to Barcelona, Spain, just before the Fab Four spun into pop orbit. A dozen years later, Munch takes pop-star incest one silly step further to involve a relationship between actual brothers. *Harry and Max* joins a small list of smart movies that ratchet up the stakes of sibling rivalry until we fear a meltdown coming: *Igby Goes Down*, *You Can Count on Me*, *The Cement Garden*.

The new movie is less about incest than it is a humane dissection of a pivotal if troubled family relationship. A nifty supporting cast includes Rain Phoenix, who's compelling as the girl whose affections become a bone for these dogs. Tom Gilroy is nifty as a conscience-stricken teacher trying to disentangle himself from six

months in Max's orbit. Michelle Phillips, underused as the backstage mom, and Justin Zachary as Max's boyfriend give emotional weight to Max's choices and the dead-on feeling that the small world we glimpse is part of a very real universe that we should all navigate with as much grace as Max does. *Opens Friday.* ▼

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by Maureen Bogues

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Suspense, romance, comedy, aliens

'Reel San Francisco' enters week three

by Tavo Amador

The Balboa Theatre's series of movies filmed and set in San Francisco continues, providing wonderful images of the City by the Bay. Veteran director Edward Dymtryk's *The Sniper* ('52) stars Arthur Franz as a paroled sex-offender and serial killer. Franz's mild-mannered appearance adds to the suspense. Film Noir Queen Marie Windsor is his first victim. Hard-edged Adolphe Menjou (a notorious Hollywood right-winger) plays a cop named Kafka! Blake Edwards is usually associated with romantic comedies (*Breakfast at Tiffany's*), but *Experiment in Terror* ('62) is a scary, intense story of a kidnapping. With Glenn Ford as a cop out to save Lee Remick's kid sister (a young Stephanie Powers), Ross Martin is the creepy villain. The sensational finale is set in Candlestick Park while the Giants play the Dodgers. (4/28)

Depending on the viewer's taste for uplifting whimsy, Hal Ashby's *Harold and Maude* ('71), about the unlikely relationship between 20-year-old But Cort and 79-year-old Ruth Gordon, will be touching or grating. He's rich and depressed, she's the quintessential free spirit. The movie became a cult classic. Great San Francisco area location shots. Woody Allen's stage success *Play It Again, Sam* ('72) was charmingly filmed by Herbert Ross. Allen is a wimpy movie critic in love with Diane Keaton. He gets romantic advice from the ghost of Humphrey Bogart, who, unsurprisingly, lives in San Francisco. Lots of fun. (4/29-30)

30)

Legendary silent-screen star Lon Chaney is *Outside the Law* ('21), directed by Tod Browning. Chaney plays Ah Wang, a kindly Chinese student of Confucius, and the murderous Black Mike Silva, denizen of San Francisco's underworld. (Sunday, 5/1, at 11:30 a.m. Separate admission.)

Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* ('58) is one of the most celebrated films ever shot in SF, and justifiably so. James Stewart gives an atypical performance as a controlling, devious ex-cop who becomes infatuated with mysterious Kim Novak. His obsession is frightening and gripping. Bernard Herrmann's brilliant score adds to the suspense. Ann Sheridan, one of the warmest, most attractive and talented stars of the '30s and '40s, sadly is not well-remembered today. In *Woman on the Run* ('50), she's a wife whose husband witnessed a gangland killing, and she and the cops have to find him before the hoods do. Sensational SF locations enhance this suspenseful noir. (5/1-2)

Finn Taylor's *Dream with the Fishes* ('97) is supposed to be about LSD and voyeurism, but who knows for sure. With David Arquette and Brad Hunt.



Kim Novak is the object of James Stewart's obsession in Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*.

Dopamine ('03) is a fascinating contemporary romantic comedy about the nature of sexual attraction and love. Directed by Mark Decena. (5/3)

Invasion of the Body Snatchers ('78) is one of the most intelligent and scary science fiction films ever made. With Donald Sutherland and Brooke Adams fleeing the pod people. Director Phil Kaufman salutes Don Siegel's '56 original version and brings back that film's star, Kevin McCarthy, for a cameo. *It Came From Beneath the Sea* ('55) pits scientists in a nuclear sub against a giant octopus, with the destruction of the Golden Gate Bridge a real possibility. Who will win? Special effects by Ray Harryhausen. (5/4) ▼

World snapshot

by Jason Victor Serinus

Uprooting - Warsaw Village Band (World Village)

What is going on here? The opening chords are savage, stark, frightening. After 18 seconds of raw assault, the CD begins with "In the Forest (*W boru kalinka*)", a traditional Polish song about confronting dreams with reality. As the disc advances through its hypnotic 43-minute program, the raucous Warsaw Village Band's 16th-century Polish fiddle, cello, dulcimer, frame drum, hurdy-gurdy, baraban drum, and vocals receive occasional support from a siren, Feel-X's live scratch, the Lipsk Women's Choir and other distinguished traditional artists.

The Warsaw Village Band gives ancient music from the lowland Mazovia region of Poland a welcome shot in the arm. Save for "When Johnny Went To Fight in the War," an original lament against "humanity's stupidest invention," the songs are traditional with a distinctly modern edge. WVB counts among its influences Janina and Kazimierz Zdrzalik, teachers of metaphysical songs, trance melodies and traditional dances; the Lipsk Women's Choir,



whose sound and repertoire reflect a melding of eastern and western Slavic cultures; and the Marian Pelka Band, whose senior members create ecstatic, trance-inducing music. What's most striking about this mind-opening recording is that it's difficult to tell what's more driving, the pulse of modern youth or the voice of a peasant tradition that has endured war, economic hardship, and the joys and pains of love.

Egypt - Youssou N'Dour (Nonesuch)

Winner of the 2005 Grammy for Best Contemporary World Music Album, vocalist Youssou N'Dour's joyful disc *Egypt* celebrates the Senegalese path of Islam and of Sufi thought and practice. In songs that celebrate the caliphs, saints and sages of Senegal, N-



Dour "praises the tolerance of my religion," and urges listeners to "choose your way. Choose, and respect others' choices."

N'Dour first came to worldwide attention in the mid-'80s with his vocals on Peter Gabriel's album *So*. After touring with his own band for 20 years, he has mastered the ability to fuse Senegal's traditional music of percussion and praise with Afro-Cuban, pop and rock elements. While he has sometimes been accused of pandering to Western pop tastes, *Egypt* signals N'Dour's return to his African and spiritual roots. Despite some sentimental strings from the Fathy Salama Orchestra that occasionally surface amidst the vocals, West African harp-lute, Senegalese percussion, and otherwise authentic sounds of the Beugue Fallou Ensemble, this is timeless music of great beauty and faith. ▼

OPERA

Remembering Mr. Adler

San Francisco Opera director's centenary year

by Stephanie von Buchau

Kurt Herbert Adler, director of San Francisco Opera from 1953 until '81, was born 100 years ago this month. Except for some on-line celebration, almost nobody in the city took notice, not even the opera company he raised to international prominence, the company from which all local opera-lovers of my generation learned their impossibly high standards.

When we bitch and moan about productions of SFO directors since his reign, we are acknowledging our debt to Mr. Adler, as he was always called. We are not, however, saying things were always better in the old days, because they weren't.

If you go over the regimes of the past four SFO GDs with a fine-tooth comb, you discover a rather startling fact. I used a calculator to ascertain that, given a nine-opera norm, all four come out with averages of three good, three mediocre and three lousy performances season after season. So what set Mr. Adler apart?

First of all, he was a musical artist. Born in *fin de siècle* Vienna during the most tumultuous period in modern music, Adler attended the Viennese Musikakademie and University, making his conducting debut at age 20 in Max Reinhardt's celebrated theater. He assisted Toscanini at Salzburg in '36 and got out of Europe just in time, coming to the States for an engagement at the Chicago Opera in '38. He moved on to San Francisco as chorus director in '43. After the death of SFO founder Gaetano Merola in '53, Adler was named director.

After '61, he did not conduct, because Robert Watt Miller, the *eminence grise* of the SFO board of directors, did not think the GD should spread himself so thin. On Miller's death in the early-'70s, Adler resumed conducting. He once told me it was "like riding a bicycle, you never forget," but in fact conducting a large operatic ensemble requires repetitive motor skills which he had apparently lost. His tempos were glacial, with overbearing brass and percussion balances. His last major conducting event, the disastrous '78 *Lohengrin*, was rumored to have cost over \$1 million, mostly for extra orchestral rehearsals.

Golden ring

Still, he knew what was correct musically even if he couldn't always reproduce it himself. Under Adler, SFO may not have experienced many world premieres — actually two, *Blood Moon* and *Angle of Repose*, both awful — but the music he did introduce was essential. Strauss' *Die Frau ohne Schatten* and *Capriccio*; Berlioz' *Les Troyens*; operas by Janacek; the two-act *Lulu* and revised *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk*; and that fabulous '72 *Ring* with Birgit Nilsson, Jess Thomas, Thomas Stewart and Otmar Suitner, still the best cast and conducted *Ring* I've ever heard live. Wagner and Strauss, just emerging from the taint of WWII, were SFO's strong suit during the '60s and '70s. Adler never felt the need to apologize for their music.

Puccini selections were generous (we haven't heard *Manon Lescaut* or *Il trittico* since Adler's



Adler put San Francisco Opera on the map by casting European singers.

departure) but not idiomatic. Bel canto was spotty unless Joan Sutherland or Alfredo Kraus were in the cast. Except for the '71 *Manon* (Sills and Gedda), '74 *Esclarmonde* (Sutherland and Aragall) and '76 *Thais* (Sills and Milnes), glamorous French opera had to wait until Mansouri's reign. And poor Verdi. I think Adler liked Verdi, but he didn't have a clue about Italian music. Verdi was typically unfunny *Falstaff*, undramatic *Otello* and un-musical *Traviata* and *Trovatore*.

More important than the minuses, since opera is a singing art, Adler put SFO on the map by hir-

ing European singers before anybody in the US had heard of them. His scout, Otto Guth, doesn't get enough credit for spotting brilliant voices. Thus introduced to America were Inge Borkh, Stuart Burrows, Boris Christoff, Mario del Monaco, Tito Gobbi, Sena Jurinac, Sandor Konya, Nilsson, Margaret Price, Leonie Rysanek, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Anja Silja, Giulietta Simionato and Renata Tebaldi, plus the great American diva Leontyne Price. Adler also discovered and nurtured the late (and still lamented) Calvin Simmons. Of course, the Merola Opera Training Program was his

baby.

Finally, KHA educated audiences, not with academic claptrap, but with musical examples. Before him, the opera crowd was rich, social and often inebriated. By the '72 *Ring* (SFO's first since '35), the Saturday night subscription audience was the best I'd sat with in any American or European opera house I'd attended. They were the first (except for Bayreuth) to wait until the music stopped before applauding. They rightly gave the biggest Wagnerian ovations to the conductor. They weren't intellectual snobs, either. I remember a standing ovation at the end of the first act of *L'Elisir d'amore* in '67 (still my all-time favorite SFO per-

formance) and another standing O for Fiorenza Cossotto's "Judgment" scene in the middle of the last act of *Aida*.

That was why, when Adler revoked my press privileges in '75 because he was offended that I dared criticize the conducting of Mstislav Rostropovich, I defended myself: "Maestro, I learned my high standards from you." Adler later apologized, saying that he "cared" about Slava, who was a freedom-fighter, though I never understood why that should allow him to trash Tchaikovsky. With minor exceptions, Mr. Adler had exceedingly high musical expectations and standards. So why shouldn't we? ▼

GREEN CANDY PRESS

Let's Shut Out the World by Kevin Bentley



"...sexy, funny and quietly elegant..." —David Bergman, author of *The Violet Hour*

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Photo: Andrew French

Day tripping

by Robert Julian

Let's Shut Out the World by Kevin Bentley; Green Candy Press, \$14.95

The book's cover shows two bare-chested men locked in an embrace. It is published, in paperback, by a local San Francisco press. These facts might cause an experienced book reviewer to expect an excruciating exercise in self-indulgence, one that lacks all the requisite qualities necessary to attract a large publishing house. That, however, would be a stereotype. In truth, Kevin Bentley's *Let's Shut Out the World* is a book so compelling, so exquisitely rendered, it makes me want to run to A Different Light Bookstore and insist they remove every other publication from their windows and focus all their attention on this brilliant autobiographical memoir.

Bentley is the author of *Wild Animals I Have Known* and the editor of *Boyfriends from Hell*. In *Let's Shut Out the World*, he continues to illuminate his journey through the streets, alleys, and

backroom bars of San Francisco. But foreshadowing his own homosexual deluge are the years Bentley spent as a young Army brat on an adolescent tour of duty through an assortment of red states, dragged along by his abusive father and hapless mother. Texas is the backdrop for his most humiliating experiences at the hands of redneck high school jocks. Although his passions left him speechless at the time, Bentley has no trouble recalling those feelings in retrospect. "For the constant, hot undercurrent of desire that kept me terrified an erection might give me away in the rank proximity of the locker room, that drove me to my knees before the very worst of my oppressors in the secret hours of the night, I had no words."

Like many alienated young men of the 1970s, Bentley makes his way to San Francisco and embarks on a queer journey of self-discovery. His book describes, in roughly chronological order, Bentley's passage from adolescence to middle age. It consists of 13 essays or short stories, each one rewarding on its own. Taken together, they represent the arc of a



lifetime as Bentley moves through the hedonistic days of pre-AIDS SF into the horrifying, soul-expanding detour that would follow. Through it all, the author maintains his own sense of grace and dignity by means of a well-developed ironic sensibility. A Feydeau farce, a Joe Orton orgy, a Marx Brothers calamity lurks at the periphery of every tragedy, just one slammed door away from the funeral pyre and a grieving widower.

In some ways, *Let's Shut Out the World* is the antidote to Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City*. Maupin's Little Mary Sunshine prose voice was perfect for capturing the innocence and joy

of San Francisco in the '70s. But when the going got rough, his essential optimism could seem strangely out of sync with reality, several steps removed from the life many would come to know. But Bentley, with an amazing economy of prose and complete believability, captures the whole tawdry sweep of events from the '70s to the present day. Cultural touchstones include the soap opera *Dark Shadows*, Fields Bookstore on Polk Street, "church" on Sunday mornings at the Balcony, and visits to the old clap clinic on the corner of 4th St. and Clementina.

The title is clearly Bentley's prescription, if not for happiness, at least for survival. Bentley turns in the best smiling-through-tears performance since Susan Hayward departed this veil of carefully-filtered close-ups. But that does not diminish his exceptional skill as a writer, one whose work can stand side by side with the best, and never suffer by comparison. ▼

Kevin Bentley reads at A Different Light on May 5.

Hot lesbian fantasy material

New short-story collection of erotica arrives

By Kris Scott Marti

Best Lesbian Erotica '05, edited by Tristan Taormino; Cleis Press, \$14.95

Sizzling hot sex expert Tristan Taormino has done it again! In 1995, Taormino pitched the *Best Lesbian Erotica* compilation to Felice Newman of Cleis Press. Two Lambda Literary

Awards and 10 years later, this anthology is still smoking hot. This year's offering of 26 short stories explicitly describes the myriad ways women relate to and have sex with women.

There are lots of collections of erotica out there made for and by queer women, but most of them elicit groans instead of moans, full of cliché situations and nearly clinical descriptions of sexual acts. So it is a pleasure to report that not only are the stories in this volume unique and sexy, but most contain the elements of great writing: plot, conflict, tension and character development. As Newman states in her introduction, "Lesbian erotica should combine high quality writing and hot sex." Well, there you go!

With settings running the gamut from urban alleys to rural stables to Hell, there is something for everyone. Characters include the usual femmes and butches, straight girls experimenting and longtime girlfriends. There are also fag dykes, carny folk, '80s mall girls and even a Jack the Ripper-obsessed Victorian sadist.

The stories are not set out in any type of discernable order, so if the reader wants a story with bondage or gender-play, she has to hunt around. This allows for the happy accident of exposing oneself to a fantasy that might have been unappealing in its description but arousing once given a chance. Several pieces fit that description. For example, "Our Women Know What To Do" is about a straight woman dating a Muslim Turkish man who wants her to wax her pubic hair. Yeah, that sounds like crap, rubbing my



feminist beliefs the wrong way instead of rubbing my feminine bits the right way. But the story is sensual, sexy, and revealing, with lots of tasty lady-loving.

"The Trick" is about a woman frustrated with her girlfriend, so she picks up a prostitute. This brings up all kinds of issues around sex work and exploitation. The story is raw and brutal, but it is also very hot fantasy-material. The details are current and vibrant, from the slang used, to the 50 Cent song playing, to the description of rolling a blunt.

My favorite story in this volume is "Envy" by Teresa Lama. It grabbed me from the first line: "The moment I saw Araceli, I decided I hated her." A story about dance students in a highly competitive program who turn to each other for support and affection, it is taut, dramatic and surprising. It's full of evocative details of the lovers' surroundings and their physiological response to one another, for example: "I felt my clit struggling fitfully against my tights, like a tiny captured bird." "Envy" stands out as not just fine erotica, but a fantastic short story.

Bad girls

Heartbreaking and vicious, "Una" and "Roulette" are stories about falling for the wrong girl, but damn is that woman hot. These pieces are interesting because they help to demystify the attraction to bad girls, and the gut-wrenching because the bad girls don't redeem themselves in the end. They ruthlessly go after what they want, leaving tears and unsatisfied lovers in their wake.

A couple of challenging stories about gender identity are presented in a straightforward and empowering way. In "Fags Like Us," the reader is treated to the wonderfully filthy and forbidden world of gay men's sex clubs taken over for the night by dykes and transmen. The description of the butch bear and his boy would make some gay guys I know blush. In "Boxer Briefs," Bradley rebels against her girlfriend refusing to accept her yearning for men's clothes and style by wearing boxer briefs and packing a dildo to work.

There are a couple of clunkers. At least two have very mechanical and unimaginative sexual descriptions caught in a bare-bones story structure. But since there is such a broad variety of sexual interests, the stories that I didn't care for could easily become someone else's sticky pages.

This is a fabulous addition to anybody's smut collection. I would recommend it not just to lesbians trying to warm up the bed, but also their gay male friends who don't know what the heck two women do in bed — or even worse, think they do know. This book is eye-opening and educational as well as being delightful one-handed reading. ▼

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Back to Jonestown

'The People's Temple' re-created at Berkeley Repertory Theatre

by Richard Dodds

If you were regularly praised as a combination of Martin Luther King Jr., Albert Einstein, Angela Davis, and Mao Zedong, maybe it's not such an unthinkable leap to see yourself as a vessel of heaven as well. But the Rev. Jim Jones didn't stop there, eventually instructing his flock to accept him as their sole heavenly father.

So, who was heaping praise on the man who would soon lead 900 of his followers to their death in the Guyana jungle? Count the late SF Mayor George Moscone in the cheering squad, along with the more recent mayor Willie Brown. The daily newspapers also liked what they saw, up to a point, but then were too intimidated to investigate the increasingly strange behavior surrounding the People's Temple. And then, virtually overnight, the San Francisco congregation picked up and moved to the death camp known as Jonestown.

It was a sensational story in 1978, but that's not the approach taken by *The People's Temple* at Berkeley Rep. Combining historical documentation with newly conducted interviews, this important world premiere seeks to put the events in a context that makes some sense out of the

madness. The production offers its revelations in a steady, sober march toward a tragedy made more affecting because it's presented as individual stories.

Director Leigh Fondakowski was head writer on *The Laramie Project*, a title she also holds on *The People's Temple*. The new show lacks some of the dramatic impact of the earlier work, not only because it's more about history than current headlines, but because many of the characters lack the easily identifiable iconography of the *Laramie* cast: preacher, sheriff, bartender, nurse, etc. In *The People's Temple*, it's not always easy to recall characters already introduced.

There are important exceptions. When James Carpenter and Lauren Klein are playing the parents of two daughters lost to Jonestown, speaking with the

tremulous calm of years of reflection, we always know where we are. This is also true of John McAdams, who plays Jim Jones' haunted son, who missed the massacre because of a basketball game. He also takes on the role of Jim Jones himself with an unforced charisma.

Played out on a set of endless file cabinets that become stand-ins for coffins, *The People's Temple* doesn't have quite the momentum for its three hours on the stage. But it's a drama with staying power, as the collision of the preventable and inevitable play out over and over again. ▼

The People's Temple will run at Berkeley Rep through May 29. Tickets are \$10-\$55. Call (510) 647-2949 or go to berkeleyrep.org.



John McAdams takes on the role of Jim Jones with unforced charisma.

My Own Wife

◀ Arts cover

joyed. He was still struggling with the Charlotte von Mahlsdorf material when someone suggested that he use his first-hand experiences with von Mahlsdorf as the framework for the play. In other words, Doug Wright would become a character named Doug Wright.

The newly unblocked Wright called upon director Kaufman and actor Mays to join him at the Sundance Theatre Lab in Utah to brainstorm, and starting from theatrical scratch, a play began to form.

"We were all such good friends before the production," Wright said, "that we feared it would either cement our relationships forever or turn us into the bitterest of enemies. We're closer than ever."

In fact, a few days after this interview, Wright, Kaufman, and Mays were heading to Poland to present *I Am My Own Wife* at a theater festival.

"On closing night," the playwright said, "they're having a party for us at one of the few clubs in Krakow known to be hospitable to a gay and lesbian clientele. It's being hosted by Krakow's leading, if not only, drag queen, and they're hoping to get other transies there, but the rumor has it that there are so few of them in Krakow they're going to have to bus them in from Warsaw."

Gay homage

Because he is a character in his own play, and that character describes himself as someone who "grew up gay in the Bible Belt," *I Am My Own Wife* is his most "out" play.

"But my very first play that I wrote when I was still in college dealt pretty candidly with homosexuality, so I always felt in a way that my sexual identity has been indivisible from my writing. I hope that all the work has what we precariously call a 'gay aesthetic' and a sense of homage to gay writers who have come before me."

Wright's next project is "another piece you could say ascribes to a certain gay aesthetic," he said. It's a musical adaptation of the cult 1975 documentary *Grey Gardens*, about Jackie Kennedy's cousin and aunt who shut them-



Charlotte von Mahlsdorf lived openly as a transvestite in East Berlin.

selves off from the world in their decaying Long Island estate.

"I think I was tantalized because it's a film I adore, and adapting it into a musical seemed like it would either be absolutely genius or a complete shipwreck. Those, I think, are the kind of projects to pursue."

Happily partnered with singer-songwriter David Clement, and with a career in high gear, the playwright is smiling a lot these

days.

"It finally feels, after slaving at this for 20 years, that when people ask what I do, I can say 'playwright' and not feel like I'm hedging anymore." ▼

***I Am My Own Wife* will run May 3-29 at the Curran Theatre. Tickets are \$40-\$72. Call 512-7770 or go to bestofbroadway-sf.com.**

Out There

◀ page 30

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And now, a special, intimate look into our mailbag.

"Dear de Roberto,

"She was drinking buddies with Pope John Paul II. With him gone, I was afraid we'd lost our most strident voice of caring and compassion at the Vatican. Great news! Dame Edna used to play pinocle in Potsdam with the new Benedict XVI. He calls her 'Saint Edna.' She calls him 'Eggs.'"

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THEATRE

Last call at the Kurt Weill saloon

Bebe Neuwirth to star in 'Here Lies Jenny' at Post St. Theatre

by Richard Dodds

The New York reviews for Bebe Neuwirth's *Here Lies Jenny* were all over the place, and...

"I don't want to talk about that," Neuwirth said. "I don't comment on the reviews because I don't read them."

But then she did comment, a bit.

"It's interesting. You say they were all over the place. Well, like I say, everybody's going to have a different perception of what happened that night at that bar."

That bar is a last-stop watering hole where a tattered woman spends the night telling her stories via the music of Kurt Weill, with a little help from a pianist and two rough denizens of the bar. Beyond that, Neuwirth concedes, it's not an easy show to describe.

"It's not Bebe and her boys. It's not a revue. It's not a lesson in Kurt Weill. There's no linear story, but each song is necessitated by the previous one. We learn all kinds of things about this woman, and yet it's just our impressions. Our director says the show is like a poem, but it's not a cerebral exercise for only intellectuals. All you need to bring to this show is an open heart and an open mind."

The 70-minute show began last year as a late-night entertainment performed three times a week at a small Manhattan theater. Business was good, the run was extended, and the performances moved into prime time. The upcoming engagement at the Post Street Theatre is the first —

and so far the only one planned — following the New York run.

It really does seem more than just another show for Neuwirth. "This is a very profound and deep experience for a lot of us involved with it," Neuwirth said from New York during a break in rehearsals. "It's the kind of thing you just don't want to say goodbye to. It lives in us all the time."

The idea for the show began as Neuwirth was looking for songs for some possible future project. "It seemed like the music was heavy on the Kurt Weill side, but I didn't want to just stand at a microphone singing a bunch of songs. And I certainly was not going to tell people about my life, like people do in one-person shows. The only persons allowed to do that are Elaine Stritch and Patti LuPone."

She turned for help to actor-director Roger Rees, a frequent guest star on *Cheers*, where Neuwirth created an indelible impression as Lilith Sternin-Crane. Ann Reinking, her co-star from *Chicago* on Broadway, joined up to stage the dances. "They're not dance numbers," Neuwirth advised. "This is what these people would do if they were in this saloon."

The 20 or so Weill songs come from a variety of sources and musicals, and the lyricists include Bertolt Brecht, Alan Jay Lerner, Langston Hughes, Ogden Nash, and Ira Gershwin. "Whatever brilliant lyricist Weill was working with, I feel all these songs contain a duality of some kind, an irony of some kind, and I think they are all emotionally rich and fearless."

Some of this was missing when Neuwirth starred as Pirate Jenny

in ACT's 1999 production of *The Three-Penny Opera*. That experience was "a little bit frustrating," she said, because the direction "came more from an intellectual concept than making it truthful on an emotional level."

Asked why Weill material is so potent for her, she offered an art-museum analogy. "Somebody stands and weeps in front of Renoir, somebody stands and weeps in front of Cassatt, and somebody stands and weeps in front of Van Gogh. When I see an Egon Schiele, I go, 'Oh my God, I get it. I get it.' It just feels familiar on a soul level. Even spiritual."

Somewhat more prosaic, perhaps, is Neuwirth's role as an assistant DA on *Law and Order: Trial by Jury*, the latest in NBC's successful franchise. She only considered the show because it's shot in New York, and she didn't seem too concerned whether or not it gets picked up for another season. "I'm not going to lie to you," she said. "My first love is to be dancing on a stage."

But there are no Broadway projects in the works — at least not at this very moment. "You can probably tell by now I'm not one of those people who scheme and plot out their course. Depending on what angle you're looking at it from, it's either a lazy attitude or a Zen attitude. I prefer to think it's Zen."

For more info on *Here Lies Jenny*, call 771-6900 or go to post-streettheatre.com.

Short scenes

• The Magic Theatre launches *Hothouse '05*, its second annual festival of new plays, with *The Rules of Charity*. Opening April 30, Joe Belluso's play follows the everyday absurdities of a disabled gay man who is also facing eviction. Call 441-8822 or go to magictheatre.org.

• *The Boys from Syracuse*, Rodgers and Hart's 1937 variation on Shakespeare, is the final show in 42nd Street Moon's season. The musical, opening April 30 at the Eureka Theatre, is one of the better-known selections for the troupe that presents staged concerts of seldom-seen musicals. Call 978-2787 or go to 42ndst-moon.org. ▼



'It's not Bebe and her boys. It's not a revue. It's not a lesson in Kurt Weill.'

Richard Dodds can be reached at BARstage@aol.com.

Dear John

'Lennon' deified onstage

by Richard Dodds

The musical known as *Lennon* is a little bit Broadway and a little bit rock and roll. And that adds up to a little bit intriguing and a little bit not-so-hot.

But just the effort to tell the story of John Lennon is a brave undertaking, dealing with an individual of towering influence, edgy personality, complicated artistry, and a deifying death. Plus there's a protective widow watching from the wings.

Whatever form employed to tell the story, it goes without saying that the most important component is the music, comprised almost entirely of Lennon's post-Beatles work. Unfortunately, it does need to be said because, in the Broadway-bound *Lennon*, the musical sound never quite hits high gear. Even though the stage is set up more like a rock concert than a Broadway musical, with a synthesizer-enhanced band on stage, the musicians don't find much power in the watery arrangements of songs that can defy theatricality.

Nor do the nine members of



Actors Chad Kimball, Julie Danao.

the cast, all of whom variously play Lennon, bring much authenticity to the songs. While it was probably wise not to have a single performer carry the show as Lennon, the communal approach dissipates a focusing energy — at least it does

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John Schlesinger express

William J. Mann serves up tasty account of the late director

by Matthew Kennedy

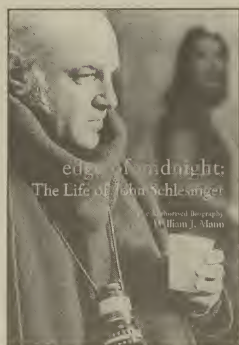
Edge of Midnight: The Life of John Schlesinger by William J. Mann; Billboard Books, \$27.95

The British film, television, and opera director John Schlesinger (1926-2003) never found the right tempo. Bombs and disappointments came more regularly than hits, while his best work is approached with qualified praise. But there is much to admire, and it is on abundant display in William J. Mann's *Edge of Midnight: The Life of John Schlesinger*, recently published by Billboard Books. Mann (*Wisecracker, Behind the Screen: How Gays and Lesbians Shaped Hollywood, 1910-1969*) became a friend and documentarian as Schlesinger lived his last two years as a stroke patient in Palm Springs. As a result, there is a loose, conversational tone to the book that places it somewhere between biography and memoir. The effect makes for a pleasurable read: easy, chatty, and filled with incident. You know John Schlesinger when this book is over.

He grew up the son of a dentist in Hampstead. Amidst middle-class respectability, he felt the twinge of difference that marks the childhood of so many gay boys. He never apologized or sensationalized his homosexuality,

but rather courageously integrated it into his life and later into his films. He thrived at theatrical performances at Oxford while discovering the pleasures of non-committal sex and fast-burning affairs. He showed promise as a documentary filmmaker with the BBC, then joined the ranks of talented young Englishmen Tony Richardson, Lindsay Anderson, and Karl Reisz, making interesting movies on a shoestring. Their work in the early '60s came to be known as the British New Wave, a bracing genre filled with narrow rowhouses, industrial smokestacks, and laboring-class angst.

Mann charts Schlesinger's rise among his compatriots, offering an assessment of their competitive ambitions. Schlesinger's '63 *Billy Liar* has become a minor classic, capturing the fantasy life of a peon (the perfect Tom Courtenay) in a bleak world. Schlesinger invests such dry-eyed warmth in the film that it circumvents sentimentality to achieve a rare humanity. The merits of his '65 Swinging London breakthrough hit *Darling* will be debated as long as there are movies. Mann appears ambivalent, highlighting the obviousness of *Darling*'s message as well as its flaws in technique and psychology. But it remains "highly entertaining, well-written, sharply directed" and "a fascinating document of a period." Malcolm the photographer, played by



Schlesinger's friend Roland Curram, is the first happy, well-adjusted homosexual of modern British cinema. The decade therein looks quaint today, and Schlesinger grew to abhor the film, but Mann remains in awe of star Julie Christie's mesmerism.

Schlesinger never repeated himself, insuring that his dossier became a patchwork of genres and mediums. He stumbled with his first color Hollywood picture, the languid idyll *Far from the Madding Crowd*. His next movie, 1969's *Midnight Cowboy*, should by all logic age badly. Derelict streetpeople are no longer a novelty in this post-Reaganomics world, yet even now we feel Schlesinger's quiet rage at what he saw of America's dispossessed in New York City. The performances of Jon Voight and Dustin Hoffman offer an electric jolt with each viewing; their love story is neither sexual nor platonic, but something more emotionally transcendent. It seems no coincidence that the making and success of *Midnight Cowboy* coincide with the meeting of Michael Childers, the handsome, bright UCLA film student who would become Schlesinger's

life-partner.

Schlesinger's reputation has suffered considerably since his career peak with *Midnight Cowboy*. There was *Sunday, Bloody Sunday* in 1971, which I believe Mann overpraises as Schlesinger's masterpiece. This story of a gay man (Peter Finch), a straight woman (Glenda Jackson) and the bisexual man they both love (Murray Head) caused quite the fuss, and they're still talking about that close-up kiss between Finch and Head. Schlesinger maintained that *Sunday* was autobiographical, and Mann scored a coup in getting an interview with John Steiner, the elusive pre-Childers lover who inspired Head's character. *The Day of the Locust* ('75) is intermittently dazzling, but always evocative of the underbelly of '30s Hollywood. Again, Schlesinger draws easy symbolic references to decay and spiritual emptiness, earning the nickname "John Sledgehammer." The overlong *Yanks* with Richard Gere and Vanessa Redgrave is frankly dull, and what was he thinking with *Honky Tonk Freeway*?

The downward spiral was interrupted with promising drafts such as *Marathon Man* with Dustin Hoffman, *The Falcon and the Snowman* with Sean Penn, *An Englishman Abroad*, and the eccentric *Cold Comfort Farm*, but he never regained preeminent status among directors. He moved to television and opera with occasional success, highlighted by stagings of *The Tales of Hoffmann* with Plácido Domingo, *Der Rosenkavalier* with Kiri Te Kanawa, and a startlingly good small-screen treatment of *Separate Tables* with his *Madding Crowd* stars Julie Christie and Alan Bates. Still, the slide continued from the Santerian-inspired *The Believers* to the Melanie Griffith (!) thriller *Pacific*

Heights, to the exploitive Sally Field revenge drama *Eye for an Eye*. Schlesinger hit bottom at the end with *The Next Best Thing*. Even his loyalists had difficulty swallowing Rupert Everett as a gay man who drunkenly impregnates Madonna, who then hooks up with Benjamin Bratt for a grotesque lavender hybrid of *Jules and Jim* and *Kramer vs. Kramer*.

Schlesinger loved to direct, and guided several actresses to their best work. He counted many among his extended family, yet he frequently preferred exclusively homosexual gatherings. He didn't just love men physically, he loved their minds, their humor, and the easy camaraderie of their company. If he had a capacity for misogyny, it did not reveal itself easily. *Edge of Midnight* is filled with one actress (and actor) after another offering pacans to Schlesinger's talent, wit, and heart. "I just love him," said Julie Christie between tears during one of their last meetings, "always have." Eileen Atkins cherishes their visit to a "transsexual boutique" in search of "huge, wobbly tits." Glenda Jackson was endeared by his insecurity. Kaye Ballard playing yenta to Schlesinger and Childers is a hoot. When she says, "Oh my, Michael was a cute little fella!" you can practically see her lips smacking.

Mann employs a neat framing device. He begins his chapters with a relevant anecdote from the "present," i.e. his time with Childers, nurse Maureen Danson, and a frail Schlesinger. The bulk of each chapter then takes up wherever the last one left off. The choice is not disorienting, but cinematic and personalizing. When *Edge of Midnight* is over, you may feel like you've passed some time under the Palm Spring sun, absorbing both its light and the remembrances of a singular man. ▼

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Good thing from Munich

Christian Thielemann tackles Bruckner 5th

by Tim Pfaff

For anyone bored witless, then scared shitless, by the Vatican shenanigans of the past month, it's a major consolation to hear something come out of Munich besides a new Pope with a lethally negative doctrine about homosexuals. If I were a Roman queer, I'd be steering clear of the Popemobile for the duration of the new papacy. It's already running.

My eyes actually teared up when I read conductor Christian Thielemann write, in the notes to his meltingly beautiful new recording of Bruckner's Symphony No. 5 (DG), "I'm not a Catholic." That statement alone could shorten his tenure as the new music director of the Münchner Philharmoniker, even if his predecessor, James Levine was, *Gott in Himmel*, a Jew. "It doesn't matter what faith one belongs to."

The context of his remark was the pointlessness of speculating how "Catholic" the symphonies of the mystically devout Bruckner (the Austrian Messiah of his day) are, and therefore what the prop-



Thielemann achieves the sublime.

er performing venues for them are. Thielemann clearly thinks this music belongs out in the world. His more interesting observation is that the pauses that are such characteristic features of Bruckner's instrumental music might reflect the extent to which Bruckner did his musical thinking and composing at the organ.

The pauses, Thielemann speculates, are like those an organist would make to change registra-

tion: to create new sounds. "The organ's characteristic sonority found its way, at least to a certain extent, into his treatment of the orchestra," he adds, backing it up with this live performance of the symphony (from his inaugural concert with the orchestra last October) that bears it out in strains of the most sublime beauty. He plays the Munich Philharmonic like a master organist, achieving that sublime, superhuman breathlessness only the organ can deliver.

I read the note after my first, rapt listening to the symphony, which was an experience of unalloyed wonder. BBC Legends' release of a 1971 live performance of the work under Jascha Horenstein had moved the symphony several notches up my favorites list, and I thought I'd never hear a performance to surpass it. Suddenly, simultaneously, there are two: in addition to Thielemann's, yet another live performance, with the Vienna Philharmonic under Nikolaus Harnoncourt last July (with a fascinating bonus CD of rehearsal segments). If you're a Bruckner lover, you can't be without.

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What a Day for a daydream

Eight vintage Doris Day movies collected on DVD

by John F. Karr

Doris Day made 40 movies during her 20-year career, but only a handful are available on DVD. So the new *Doris Day Collection* will be a boon for fans (Warner Bros., \$88.92; titles also available singly). The eight movies in the collection are a somewhat curious choice of five musicals, two lightweight comedies and one noir-tinged melodrama. Ranging from the beginning to the end of Day's career, they demonstrate for better or worse her range as an actress.

The black-and-white *Young Man with a Horn* was released in 1950. Doris Day is only a supporting player here. The movie's first half is besotted with music as trumpeter Kirk Douglas rises to fame. But the second half turns to melodrama as Douglas falls for a hollow Park Avenue dame. Young Man lands in the gutter before he's rescued by his love of music — and by Doris Day, the good woman who's loved him all along. The heartless dame is a splendidly campy and stern role for Lauren Bacall, but this romantic hokum is no match for the movie's earlier, gritty and fascinating tour of the dives, boîtes and classy clubs of a jazz world that's now long gone.

The next year, Day made *Lullaby of Broadway*. It's a delightful surprise. I'm a sucker for Gene

Nelson (pun intended), and this unpretentious movie's string of song-and-dance duets for the handsome hooper and Ms. Day kept me smiling. The backstage story is pabulum, as is the blustering of S.Z. Sakal, but both are whisked off for more wisecracks from an entertaining bunch of character actors, headed by Billy De Wolfe. Gladys George plays Day's mother, a broken-down, alcoholic former star, with a singing voice — no, a singing croak — that's a couple octaves lower than Elaine Stritch's. The songs may be oldies but goodies, but they're nimbly presented, with lots of tapping trading off with straw-hat 'n' soft-shoe. The numbers are consistently charming. Charm was Doris Day's strong point.

Love Me or Leave Me paired Day with James Cagney in a fairly truthful bio of the 1920s songbird known as America's Sweetheart, Ruth Etting. Nobody remembers her these days, but she was featured in the Ziegfeld Follies, starred in Broadway shows, and made lots of recordings and a couple of movies before her career went bust. It had been forcibly though unnecessarily boosted by her gangster boyfriend, and it was ended when he shot her lover. Etting's sweet image couldn't survive the scandal. The story's drama provided a stretch for Day, whose idea of serious acting was to frown. She's good. But the disc in-

cludes as a Bonus two short movies of the real Ruth Etting, which show Day's limitation. Etting's voice takes on tragedy, where Day's merely stops twinkling.

Calamity Jane was Warner Brothers' attempt to duplicate for Doris the success Betty Hutton had in the film of *Annie Get Your Gun*. Even though Day's butch act is exhausting as she tries to outdo Hutton's frenetic Annie Oakley, Day's movie is more fun. Its songs are mighty sprightly (even if antecedents for most of them can be clearly traced to both AGYG and *Oklahoma*). The big hit was "Secret Love," but I have a fondness for "Higher than a Hawk," a virile ballad Howard Keel swaggers through. "A Woman's Touch," in which Doris learns how to be girly, is a campy highlight — its old-fashioned gender stereotyping is set to such a perky tune you'll wanna sashay in a gingham skirt purty quick. And there's a sassy drag routine — under her bustle, this queen's got a "Hive Full of Honey."

Jane jumps through 10 tunes in a mostly nimble 100 minutes. Day's last musical, the 1962 circus extravaganza *Jumbo*, takes 127 minutes to deliver a miserly eight songs. The original stage version of *Jumbo* had only five Rodgers and Hart songs (though these included the standards-to-be "My Romance," "Little Girl Blue" and

"The Most Beautiful Girl in the World"), and was so inflated with Big Top talent that Actor's Equity classified it as a circus, not a musical. Paying some heed, the movie interpolated a couple more songs, including a well-chosen R&H rarity that's a wistful duet for Day and Martha Raye. But the filmmakers also interpolated too much romance and too much circus. Can a movie be high-spirited and gigantic at the same time? Not *Jumbo*. Best part of this disc is a Bonus, an antique, curious tab version of the R&H stage show *Spring is Here*.

Pajama parties

Little need be said of the re-issued *The Pajama Game*. It's classic musical comedy with a role tailor-made for Day. It's a sprightly duplication of the Broadway version, delivering Bob Fosse's choreography, virile John Raitt in his only full-scale Hollywood outing, and a raft of entertaining supporting players.

Perhaps it helps to be heterosexual when watching the foofy marital mix-ups of *Please Don't Eat the Daisies* ('60). It's a good showcase for Day, but made me uncomfortable by wanting to entertain me with the dissolution of a marriage. Funny what used to be funny: a toddler's being kept in a cage is played for laughs. And get this ironic casting, Janis Paige, the Broadway star whose role Day took in the film version of *Pajama Game*, plays a Broadway star in *Daisies*. Seeing the two together is striking. Day is to Paige what Rita Moreno was to Chita Rivera, the original Anita of *West Side Story*, the Hollywood homogenization



Day's idea of serious was to frown.

of a performer with real balls.

The Glass Bottom Boat ('66), a spy caper a la *Get Smart*, is sunk by its stupidity. Co-star Rod Taylor is eye-candy, and Paul Lynde provides a hysterical drag routine. But the movie's painful to watch.

The pleasant blandness that was a Doris Day role makes me restless in a movie that doesn't have a song or a dance coming up. It probably made her restless, too. She pulled a Greta Garbo in '73 and disappeared to Carmel, where, at 81, she still lives in seclusion. ▼

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Just Joni

by Gregg Shapiro

As a music reviewer, I invariably find myself embroiled in discussions about my favorite performers, songwriters, musicians and ultimate desert-island discs on a regular basis. While I am loathe to commit to a DID list, I almost never hesitate to cite Joni Mitchell as one of my favorites in P/S/M category. I've seen her live a few times, I own every CD she's released, and frequently quote her lyrics.

When I mention Joni Mitchell to almost anyone, gay or straight, in the adult age range, her 1971 breakthrough album *Blue* is frequently mentioned as the ultimate Joni touchstone. That's all well and good, but it was released 34 years ago. Mitchell has released a dozen more studio albums of almost exclusively original material since, including her '79 Charles Mingus collaboration, and albums on which she has re-imagined her own songs, and those of others, in orchestral settings. It's safe to say there are many more colors to her palette.

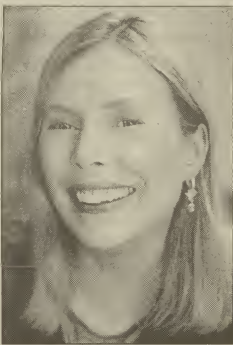
Her personal "revision" albums were 2000's *Both Sides Now* and '02's *Travelogue*. Mitchell has recently been culling from her catalog to create a series of compilations that function as themed anthologies. Fans and newcomers got a taste of Mitchell's skills in this realm with the '96 collections *Hits and Misses*. While I know any number of Mitchell-heads would swoon over a massive, career-retrospective box set, there was the hard-won '03 four-disc *The Complete Geffen Recordings* assemblage that beautifully presented her un-

derrated and daring Geffen albums *Wild Things Run Fast*, *Dog Eat Dog*, *Chalk Mark in a Rainstorm*, and *Night Ride Home*, with original artwork and a searing music-industry indictment in the CD booklet.

2004 saw the release of *The Beginning of Survival* and *Dreamland*, two exquisite single-disc sets that gathered Mitchell's songs together in new settings. *Survival* is especially notable for the inclusion of "Tax Free," a still-timely song nearly 20 years after its release. Mitchell, a longtime friend of the LGBT community, rails against corrupt politicians and insidious religious leaders, declaring, "Fuck it! Tonight I'm going dancing, with the drag queens and the punks."

By current count, three more Joni Mitchell-related collections are now available. *Songs Chosen by her Friends & Fellow Musicians* (Hear Music/Rhino) is exactly what its name suggests. When you have friends & fellow musicians like k.d. lang, Prince, Elvis Costello, Bob Dylan, Chaka Khan, Seal, and Donald Fagen and Walter Becker of Steely Dan making the selections, you can't go wrong. I was especially delighted by lang's selection of "Black Crow," and Chaka Khan's inclusion of "Two Grey Rooms," which Mitchell has said is about a gay man admiring another man from afar.

Also telling, but in a completely different way, is Joni Mitchell's *Artist's Choice* (Hear Music/Rhino) set, in which the legendary singer/songwriter opens up and shares "music that matters to her" with her fans and others. Beginning with Debussy's "Claire de Lune" and continuing



Mitchell, dancing with drag queens.

with Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday and Miles Davis, the compilation also includes, not surprisingly, selections by Dylan, Steely Dan, Leonard Cohen, Marvin Gaye, Ray Charles, Elton James, and unexpected tunes by New Radicals and Deep Forest.

Finally, the baker's dozen tracks on *Songs of a Prairie Girl* (Reprise/Rhino/Asylum/None-such) are described as Mitchell's contributions to the May '05 observances of the Saskatchewan centennial. Songs such as "Cherokee Louise," "Come in from the Cold," "Song for Sharon," "Let the Wind Carry Me" and "Ray's Dad's Cadillac" are stellar evocations of youth that ground the assortment in a particular period and induce a sensation of nostalgia. "Chinese Café," "River" and "Raised on Robbery" address equally personal, but somewhat more adult themes.

The benefit of having these curated discs is that there is the distinct possibility Mitchell's audience will grow exponentially. Still, I can't help but wish to find an album of new songs at the end of this musical rainbow. ▼

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'Shear Heaven' / Boys' Night Out @ Elevation Salon & Café

It's "Shear Heaven" at MAX's "Boys' Night Out" — but girls can come too! MAX (Mens Associated Exchange) and The Richmond/Emmet AIDS Foundation present another of their 5th Friday TGIFs at Elevation Salon & Café on April 29. Last year's

"Club Hairspray" TGIF event, with special guest Bruce Vilanch of "Hairspray", was a blast and this year's should be even better. While this is an official MAX event, the doors are open to everyone who likes a good time. Hors d'oeuvres, wine, martinis, surprise entertainment, bare-chested hunks selling raffle tickets for great prizes, and a mini silent auction. Proceeds go to support REAF's annual "Help is on the Way" gala on August 1st and the 5 AIDS agencies that will benefit from that event. \$20 at the

door. 6-9pm. Elevation Salon & Café, 451 Bush St. (at Grant Ave.).

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BE'ER NOW, a benefit for Zen Hospice Project, featuring Polkade, The Starlings, Leslie Tipton, and Toychestra. Celebrate the confluence of two mystical traditions: the Buddhist tradition of developing mindfulness toward the realization of impermanence and the emptiness of self, and the Eastern European tradition of madydancing the polka and drinking foamy, hopped beverages until the realization of an empty stein is achieved. Sister MaryMae Himm of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence is Sister of Ceremonies. Sharing the stage with Polkade will be the all-woman toy band Toychestra; the astonishing aerial ballet of duo trapeze act The Starlings accompanied by the As Is Brass Band; and the mind-bending contortion talents of Leslie Tipton. Additional music by DJ Pusser and Taylor Pederson on piano. Special guests: Dammit the Wonder Dog and her Chicken John. \$12-\$1,000 adv.; \$15-\$1,000 at door (all donations above \$15 are tax-deductible). Fri., April 29. Doors open 8pm. Broadway Studios, 435 Broadway. Info: 415.648.4112; www.polkade.com; www.zenhospice.org

Ravenous! @ CounterPULSE

CounterPULSE (the brand new, relocated 848 Community Space) presents **Ravenous!** Dinner on the Edge of Your Seat: A Benefit for Queerupture 2005. Come hungry... No! Come RAVENOUS... to this decadent cabaret extravaganza. Devour the tasty, vegan, organic creations of some of SF's most scandalous chefs and enjoy an exhilarating variety show featuring circus feats, airborne queers, singing queers and hilarious acts. Featured Performers include: Matilda aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore; Kirk Reed; Lascivious La Rue Sisters; Ashley Brockington of Liquid Fire Productions; Zee (queer butch); and Ray Ferrer aka Miss Coco Lopez. This is a benefit for Queerupture, an annual conference of queer activists from around the world. \$25-\$250 sliding (NOTAFLO). Doors at 7pm, dinner at 8pm. CounterPULSE, 1310 Mission @ 9th St. RSVP: leaqueerupture@yahoo.com. Info: www.queerupture.org

Group Hypnosis for a Great Weekend @ Magnet

Start the weekend off by making choices about who you want to be over the next few days with a session of deep inner relaxation and connection with your subconscious self. Raise your energy level; strengthen self-care behaviors; support positive attitudes; disengage from negative patterns; focus your attention for productivity; let go of your week's stresses and connect with yourself; and increase your sense of fun and adventure! Facilitated by Heron Saline, Certified Hypnotherapist, specializing in Hypnotherapy for Gay Men's Issues. Free! 8-9pm. Magnet, the gay men's health center in the Castro, located at 4122 - 18th St. Info: 415-581-1600; www.magnetsf.org

Alicia Gaspar de Alba

@ Modern Times Bookstore
Queer Latina/o Artists' Coalition (QueLaCo) is proud to sponsor the San Francisco book reading for Alicia Gaspar de Alba's *Desert Blood: The Juárez Murders*, published this spring by Arte Público Press. The novel begins in the summer of 1998. For five years over a hundred mangled and desecrated bodies have been found dumped on the Chihuahuan desert outside of Juárez, México, just across the river from El Paso, Texas. When El Paso native Ivon Villalva's younger sister gets kidnapped in Juárez, Ivon knows that it's up to her to find her sister, whatever it takes. Free. 7:30 p.m., Fri., April 29. 888 Valencia St. Info: 415-282-9246; www.mtbs.com

Rock Out w/o r Cock Out @ Femina Potens

Get ready to Rock Out w/o r Cock Out, the monthly queer and progressive rock and experimental noise event. Tonight: Yes Alexander, a solo acoustic artist; Beautiful Engines, a drum and bass duo (bassist Mark Manning, drummer Karen Sandvoss); and Space Vacuum (from outer space), who alternate in mood between shoegaze and dream pop. Come support women and transgendered musicians, eat some fish and chips, have a beer, and enjoy kick ass performances. \$5. April 29 at 9pm. Edinburgh Castle (950 Geary). Info: www.femina-potens.com

Poetry in the Arts

@ SonArts Gallery

The National Poetry Association, founded and directed by the amazing Herman Berlanti, once again brings us its extraordinary program of "Poetry in the Arts," a multimedia presentation of the brilliant use

of poetry. Featuring music by Ted Czuk and his GAMUT Band; dance with The National Arts Embassy Dance Company; poets including Neel Cherkowski and Deborah Major; theatre with the Hip-Hop Drama Company; painting by Kenneth Patchen, Ferlinghetti and Blake; and screening of award-winning cine-poems. The event benefits the Campaign to Establish the International Poetry Museum. \$10 (free for charter members). 7:30-10:30pm Fri., Apr. 29. SonArts Main Gallery & Theatre, 934 Brannan St. (near 8th St.). Info: 415-552-9261.

SF Decorator Showcase

The beautiful Presidio Heights mansion at One Cherry Street will be transformed by the 2005 San Francisco Decorator Showcase from April 30 to May 30, 2005. A special Opening Night preview is on Fri., April 29. More than 30 of the Bay Area's leading designers will make over the interior and exterior of this elegant home. This year's Decorator Showcase will also feature an audio tour for visitors. The house is open to the public six days and one evening each week: 10am-3pm Tue., Wed., Fri. & Sat.; 10am-7pm on Thu.; and 11am-4pm on Sunday and Memorial Day, May 30. Showcase closed on Mondays (except for Memorial Day). Tickets available at the door for \$30; \$25 for seniors. Info: 415-447-5830; www.decoratorshowcase.org.

10 Year Anniversary

@ Cat Club

Cat Club 10 Year Anniversary Party. Celebrate the impending demise of one of the most happening club sites in SF with DJ's Melting Girl; Adrian and Mysterious D; Otterpop; Jenny FAKE; Hicksmokey; Damon; Dangerous Dan; Black. Performances by Glamamore; Trixie Carr, belly dancers & silt walkers. Fri., April 29, 10pm 'til late. Cat Club, 1190 Folsom St.

Shadowplay @ The Stud

Shadowplay, the omnisexual indie, new wave, electro, discopunk club, presents: "Left Behind" For those not going to Coachella. Dance to the best of Coachella music, and more, with DJ Domino and guests. No cover this week only. No sunshine, none of the hassle of the Coachella Festival. Drink Specials. Fri. April 29 at the Stud, 399 9th St at Harrison St. 9pm-3am. Info: shadowplaysf.com

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Veronica Klaus

@ Michael's Octavia Lounge

Just in time for summer, Veronica Klaus hosts "Something Cool", offering great live jazz, blues and cabaret every Saturday night with her trio featuring Tammy L. Hall and special guests who drop in to say hello and lend their talents. Delicious late night food served until 1:30am on Friday and Saturdays. Ongoing Saturday nights beginning April 30. \$8 cover. 10:30pm showtime. Michael's Octavia Lounge, 1772 Market St. @ Octavia Blvd. Reservations: 415-863-3690 & (415) 863-3516; octavialounge.com

Heather Gold

@ Jon Sims Center

The creator of the hit interactive baking comedy "I Look Like An Egg, but I Identify As A Cookie" (now extended and playing at the Hotel Rex, www.subvert.com for more info) Heather Gold continues to develop her freestyle comedic performance style with a series of early-stage workshops at Jon Sims, where she will tell stories and explore a wide-range of topics, including possessions, property, law school, marriage, giving and, as always, the audience. Audience feedback is very much welcomed and encouraged. Heather will be giving away a bunch of things, including her beloved first Macintosh Plus computer, so you might end up going home with more than the price of admission. \$5. Sat., April 30, at 8pm. Jon Sims Center for the Arts, 1519 Mission Street (11th). Info/tix: 415-554-0402; www.jonsimsctr.org

Sun 1

'Bliss,' the Maitri Gala

@ Bambuddha Lounge

Actress/singer Carol Channing, jazz diva Paula West and literary lion Armistead Maupin lend their celebrity auras to "Bliss," a gala event to benefit Maitri, the last remaining AIDS hospice in northern California. The event will sparkle with celebrities, a synchronized swimming performance by the Walnut Creek Aquanauts, an array of fine wines and exotic cuisines, a silent auction, and more. \$125. 5:30pm. Bambuddha Lounge, The Phoenix Hotel, 601 Eddy St. (at Larkin). Tix/Info: 415-

675-4775; www.maitrisf.org

Kronos Quartet/Terry Riley

@ Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley

Cal Performances presents the world premiere of The Cusp of Magic, a six-movement work written and arranged for Kronos Quartet by composer and long-time collaborator Terry Riley. The piece will feature renowned Wu Man accompanying Kronos on the short-necked Chinese lute called the pipa. Plus much more. \$42. 7pm. Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley campus, Bancroft Way at College Ave. Info: 510-642-9988; www.calperfs.berkeley.edu

2005 Sex Worker Film & Arts Fest

The 2005 Sex Worker Film & Arts Festival, May 1-8, offering films by and about sex workers and live performances by sex worker artists. Events include: Leather and Latex Sex Toy Bazaar, "After Hours", the sex worker art exhibit curated by Jane Cassell, with work by Annie Sprinkle (among others); a Harm Reduction Forum; SWOPs political forum to promote decriminalization of prostitution; and Barbary Coast Street Theater. In collaboration with New College Experimental Theater program the fest presents Carole Queen, Kitten On the Keys, Kitty Kastro (Tranny Talk TV), Harlem Shake Burlesque, Big Burlesque: The Original Fat Bottom Revue, David Sterry (author of Chicken), Kirk Reed, Dee Russell, Scarlett Harlot (Unrepentant Whore), Stacey Swimme, beat-ho and many more. Raffle-atrix, Annie Danger will also emcee beat-ho's Tuesday night performance, "Thrust". Special guests at the festival also include Tucson Sex Worker Arts Festival's Juliana Piccillo and Erin Whitfield. Locations: Roxie Cinema, 3117 16 St., SomArts Gallery 934 Brannan Street, Femina Potens 465 South Van Ness; Epicenter Gallery 398 11th St. and others. More info at www.bayswan.org/swfest

Closing Night Party

@ The Cat Club

As of May 1st 2005, the Cat Club owner Tony Carracci will shut the club's doors after 10 years. The Cat Club has rocked San Francisco with such parties as Litterbox, Assimilate, Drunken Monkey Lounge, Rock-et, So What, Bondage a go go, 1984, New Wave City, and Sixteen. Tonight is the last of the Cat Club as you know it. Down this Sun, May 1, starting at 5pm. Cover Charge: \$10 (starting at 9pm). Beer bust 5pm - 9pm. DJ Mr. Carracci starts it off right, followed by doses of DJ Metal by Matt Shapiro and John Cobbett of Lucifer's Hammer. From 9pm to closing, dance your ass off every hour to DJs from the Cat Club's Hottest Parties. Cat Club, 1190 Folsom St.

The liquidFIRE Project

@ Jon Sims Center

liquidFIRE Productions & Jon Sims Center for the Arts present a work-in-progress performance of The liquidFIRE Project's "Legacies Untied: Lost Unleashed," directed by Veronica C. Combs. It's a sexy, poignant theatre piece that tells the stories of lesbian/queer women of color and how their ancestry helps them examine and celebrate their erotic power. Be a witness to the first evolution of this show before it premieres at the National Queer Arts Festival in June 2005. Feedback, suggestions, comments appreciated at the "Post Show Discussion". Cast: Caruthia Archie, Ashley Brockington, Krishnakant Chaudhri, Helen Johnson, Pamela Mack, Gita Mehrotra, Nicole Ming, Spring Opera and Nailah Pettigen. \$10 - \$15 sliding. Sun., May 1. Two shows: 6pm & 8pm. Jon Sims Center for the Arts, 1519 Mission St. Info: 415-554-0402; www.jonsimsctr.org

CounterPULSE Opening MayDay Party

Celebrate the opening of CounterPULSE on the radical people's holiday of May Day. Spoken word, music, and dance performers include Meliza Bañales, Molotov Mouths, Conspiracy of Beards, Samsara women's power ensemble, Sisterz of the Underground, Brass Liberation Orchestra, and many more. \$10-\$20 sliding (NOTAFLO). Doors 7pm; show 8pm; dancing 'til midnight. CounterPULSE, 1310 Mission St. (at 9th St.). Info: 415-626-2060; counterpulse.org

New MCC in San Mateo

There is a new MCC (LGBT church) now meeting at noon on Sundays, at College Heights Church, 1150 W. Hillsdale Blvd., San Mateo. Progressive faith, inclusive love. Make a connection! Info: 650-515-0900; www.thathewchurch.org

'Through the Looking Glass'

@ East Bay Rose Society

"Through the Looking Glass: The East Bay Rose Society Spring Rose Show." All are invited. Free admission. 1-4pm (entries allowed 6-9am; show closed for staging & judging 9:30am-1pm). Lakeside Park & Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, Oakland. Info: www.eastbayroses.org

Outlook @ Comcast Ch. 29

"Outlook", the Bay Area's LGBT video magazine since 1987. Hosted by Roberta Gonzalez-Gregg and Tom Smith. Featuring segments from around the Bay State, Nation & World. This month, join SF Mayor Gavin Newsom for a City Hall celebration of the recent court ruling in favor of gay marriage. Also, meet the Rainbow Women's Chorus. Airs Sun. May 1st at 5pm on Com-

Calendare by Mark Mardon



If jazz singing is your flavor, get a taste of crooner Peter Cincotti.

True catholicism

One way to deal with the election/selection of a demon Pope is to ignore him. You can protest, or you can continue to fill your lives with fabulousness.

And how fabulous is the **How Weird Street Fair**? Well, street dance parties don't get much better than this, if it's counter-culture you're looking for. It's not just gay, it's totally queer, in that peaceful, anything-goes-so-long-as-it-benefits-humankind sort of way. To quote from the publicity: "This year we will host a global KidCast for Peace, where kids will be able to communicate with other kids about peace, and learn digital storytelling tools. The center will be a Peace Pavilion, a place to relax, connect, and learn about fostering peace." The organizers of this premiere electronic music festival believe "music is the most universal language, able to transcend political and cultural differences." Of course their musical tastes are catholic (i.e. "comprehensive, universal; especially: broad in sympathies, tastes, or interests" — Merriam Webster) not just in name, but in practice. You'll find music stages by: Tantra/M.o.E./PsyBooty/Ceiba; El Circo/Get Freaky/Fusion; Sound of Mind/Moontribe/Xeno/Lush; and Sunset/Naked Funk/Pacific Sound System. There will be a Low Pro Lounge with capoeira and breakdancing artists; a performance stage by Anon Salon; and vendors from around the world providing unique wares. Environmental nonprofits will focus on humanity's need for peace with the earth. Street performances and artists will entertain throughout the Faire. Costumes and festive attire is strongly encouraged, and there will be a Fashion Show for Peace.

The 6th annual How Weird Street Faire takes place Sunday, May 1 from 12 noon to 8 p.m. at Howard & 12th streets. Requested donation: \$5 in costume; \$10 if not. All proceeds benefit the nonprofit World Peace Through Technology Organization.

Those of us with catholic tastes also love jazz and world music, and here in the Bay Area you'll find the best of both worlds. For instance, crooners are all the rage hereabouts at the moment, and one of the finest young upstarts in the business is coming back to the Bay Area to show off his talents, presented by **Cal Performances**. **Peter Cincotti** — aka "the new Bobby Darin," "the new Harry Connick, Jr.," "the new Frank Sinatra" — is a singer/songwriter, composer and arranger who in 2002 as an 18-year-old prodigy made his mark in the jazz scene, and people called him a "jazz wunderkind." He is part of a quartet along with woodwindmeister Scott Kreitzer (a veteran saxophonist), Canadian-born drummer Mark McLean, and Israeli-born bassist Barak Mori. The concert takes place this Saturday, April 30, 8 p.m. at U.C. Berkeley's spacious, acoustically elegant Zellerbach Hall. Tickets range \$22-\$42. Call 510-642-9988; visit www.calperfs.berkeley.edu

Also at Zellerbach Hall, this Friday, April 29, you can catch "**Seasons of Migration: An Odyssey of Transformation**," featuring music and dance from Cambodia, choreographed by Sophie-line Cheam Shapiro and created in collaboration with Cambodia's Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA). Some 27 dancers and musicians, sumptuously bedecked in sequined sarongs, golden bangles, and high-spined crowns, dance with elegant, highly stylized gestures in a combination of theater, ritual and storytelling.

Tickets for the show range \$24-\$48. Showtime is 8 p.m. Call 510-642-9988. ▼

cast channel 29 in San Francisco. For info on airings in San Jose, Sacramento, the East Bay, the South Bay and Santa Cruz, visit Outlookvideo.org

Mon 2

Transgender Awareness Week @ San Jose State

San Jose State presents the Transgender Awareness Week & Symposium, May 2-5, a campus-wide dialogue on gender that gathers artists, speakers and films dealing with the transgender (TG) experience. The Awareness Week is the brainchild of Dr. Susan Murray, Sociology Department, graduate photography student Jana Marcus, and MOSAIC Cross Cultural Center's director Hyon Chu Yi; it is organized around Marcus' award-winning photodocumentary *Transfigurations: The Making of a Man*, her MFA thesis, exhibiting the same week on campus. Symposium Day, Tue. May 3, features Jamison Green, renowned transsexual advocate, educator, and author of *Becoming a Visible Man* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2004) delivering the keynote address. The Human Rights Commission will present their workshop *Transgender 101*; filmmaker Aidan Crawford will present his documentary short, *Just A Boy*; a panel discussion with both TG men and women will be followed by the gallery opening of Marcus' *Transfigurations*. The week-long events, sponsored by many campus-wide organizations and departments, include: *Opening The Gender Box: Stories of FtM Transformations*, presented by Reed Singer and the Comm Ed Department. Peer Health Education presents *Transgender Health* with topics including health issues facing the TG. Movie nights on campus will include screenings of *Different For Girls* and *Boys Don't Cry*. The week will conclude with *TransForm*, an evening of spoken word and performance featuring Storm Florez, Julia Serrano and rock band Frootie Flavors, with an open mic to follow. All events are free. San Jose State, 1 Washington Square, San Jose. Info: www.sjsu.edu/transweek

Harm Reduction for Sex Workers @ Epicenter Gallery

Forum: *Harm Reduction for Sex Workers*. Learn about models for respectful, compassionate services for sex workers with local and international guests, sex workers and other experts. Hear from St. James Infirmary the first medical clinic run by and for Sex Workers, learn about the history and history, how they began and how they became the compassionate, successful, and effective organization they are today. Also hear from Sex Workers themselves about their experiences and ways that they implement Harm Reduction in their daily lives. Monday, May 2nd, 1-4pm. \$10 registration (NOTAFL0F). Epicenter Gallery, 398 11th St., #303. Register at 415-751-1659; email swfest@bayswan.org

Q-Sangha 'Mindful Monday' @ MCC

Q-Sangha, a ministry of the Metropolitan Community Church of SF, offers "Mindful Monday" in the engaged "Unified Buddhist" tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh ("which blends the best insights of the Theravada, Zen and Pure Land schools of Buddhism in a contemporary way"). Schedule: 6:45pm Optional early Walking Meditation. 7pm music with Evelie Posch; Welcome & Incense Offering (special light incense used); chant. 7:15pm sitting meditation (5 min. guided, 20 min. silent, 5 min. metta); Mindful Stretch (1 min.); chant. 7:50pm Teaching & Dharma Discussion (30 min. teaching, 20 min. small groups of 4 to 6, and 10 min. concluding remarks). 8:50pm Song, Offering, Announcements, etc. 9pm Closing Bows. Q-Sangha, 150 Eureka St. Info: 415-865-2750; email: qsangha@mccsf.org

Tue 3

Jessica Miller's WWBRD? @ The Lexington Club

Art Opening for *W.W.B.R.D.? What Would Bob Ross Do?* New work by Jessica Miller. Solo Show runs thru June 17. Reception on Tue., May 3, 7-9 pm. The Lexington Club, 3464 19th St. (btwn Mission/Valencia @ corner of Lexington).

Rally for 'The Forgotten' @ City Hall steps

Care Not Cash one year anniversary rally sponsored by the Coalition on Homelessness SF: "Seniors, veterans, immigrants, fami-

lies with children, people with disabilities, homeless people, battered women and poor working people are losing services while only a small fraction of homeless people are getting housing. The city agenda has targeted these vulnerable populations to pay for Care Not Cash through cuts in social programs." Meet 11am Tue., May 3 at the corner of Larkin and McAllister. Rally at City Hall steps 12 noon. Info: 415-346-3740; CHEER@sf-homeless-coalition.org



Photographer: Julian Cash

Annie Sprinkle is headmistress for Whore College in conjunction with the Sex Workers Film/Art Fest. See Wednesday.

Wed 4

Whore College

Whore College is a day of classes for sex workers and our communities. Schedule: 11am: Sex Worker Well-Being. 1pm: Self-Defense for Sex Workers. 2pm: Discussion and Panel, "Beauty Standards and Sex Work," moderated by Sadie Lune. 3:30pm: "The Business" — Marketing, Legal Issues, Training in the Bay Area, with Annie Sprinkle, Ph.D. 7:30pm: DIY Webcam with Melissa Gira. 11am-9:30. Wed., May 4th. \$40 all day, \$30 DIY Webcam (scholarships). Registration: 415-751-1659; sex-workerfest.com/whorecollege.html

Thu 5

Impact Theatre's Othello @ Theatre Rhinoceros

Preview: Theatre Rhinoceros hosts Impact Theatre's *Othello*, by William Shakespeare (replaces the previously scheduled *Big Big Love II* — *The Fat Bottom Burlesque*, which will return to the Rhino this summer). Impact's runaway hit "*Othello*" is a radical lesbian reinterpretation of the Shakespearean tragedy. Directed by Melissa Hillman. *Othello* is a dark-skinned African American lesbian whose battlefield genius has earned her a position of power within the American military. \$10-\$20. Wed.-Sat. @ 8pm; Sun. @ 3:30pm (no perf. on 5/8). Previews May 5 & 6; opening night Sat., May 7. Runs thru May 22. Downstairs Theatre (The Studio) @ Theatre Rhinoceros, 2926 16th St. (Mission/So. Van Ness). Tix: 415-861-5079; www.therhino.org

Sisters' 'Revival Bingo'!

@ MCC-SF

¡Arriba! Come and celebrate "BINGO De Mayo!" with the insanity that is Bingo. The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence Inc. are pulling out the stops for a margarita-ficent evening with special guest emcee CHIKA DIVA! They'll be giving away lots of cash and an array of special prizes. This month's charity will be Magnet, which will receive half of the proceeds from the evening's sales. Put on your sombrero, grab that fruit basket and strap it to your head and join this fiesta of fun! \$15 (includes 1 set of cards for 8 rounds of BINGO). VIP Admission: \$30 (includes VIP seating and 2 sets of cards for 8 rounds of BINGO). Additional sets of cards are available for \$5.00 at the door. 7pm Thu., May 5 (every First Thursday of the month). Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), 150 Eureka St. Tix: All American Boy, 463 Castro St. Info: www.thesisters.org

SF AIDS Hero Awards @ Center for Sex & Culture

The AIDS Candlelight Vigil committee presents the Winners of the 2005 AIDS Heroes Awards, an awards ceremony at the Center For Sex & Culture. These awards honor heroic activists in the HIV/AIDS communities in the San Francisco Bay Area. Since 1983 People With AIDS (PWA's) and AIDS activists have fought for human rights that have benefited anyone who has ever had a disease, taken medicine or wanted to take control of decisions about their own health. The SF AIDS Hero Awards honor some of the many everyday and extraordinary individuals and groups who are making all our lives better despite morally bankrupt or otherwise corrupt politicians and governments who have traditionally done too little too late. 8pm Thu., May 5. Center for Sex & Culture, 398 11th St. Info: 415-331-1500, x-AIDS (2437); email: AIDSHeroes@yahoo.com

Pirated

@ SomArts Cultural Center
Opening reception: Kearny Street Workshop presents a new multimedia visual exploration, *Pirated* — a post-Asian perspective, curated by Peggy Chung, Derek Chung, Valerie Soe, and Samantha Chanse, with Carlos Villa as advisory curator. Featuring work by Bay Area artists Stephanie Syjuco, Kathy Aoki, Donna Keiko Ozawa, Curtis Choy, Indigo Som, Michael Arcega, and others. Can piracy be justified in certain contexts? How is it used to seize and amass wealth and power, and how can it be used in resistance? Produced in association with the Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center's United States of Asian America Festival. Opens Thu., May 5, 5-8pm. Show runs thru May 28. SomArts Cultural Center's Bay Gallery, 934 Brannan St. Info: www.apiculturalcenter.org

Les Ballets Trockadero De Monte Carlo @ Zellerbach

Les Ballets Trockadero De Monte Carlo attempt to dance en pointe without falling on their faces. The inimitable "Tocks" return with their outrageous twist on ballet tradition. Dancing a fine line between high art and high camp, this group of men in tutus has become a major dance phenomenon around the globe since its inception 30 years ago, \$26-\$48. 8pm. At UC Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall. Info: 510-642-9988; www.calperfs.berkeley.edu

Paris @ Robert Koch Gallery

Opening: Robert Koch Gallery presents an exhibition of period photographs: *Paris During the Second Empire, 1852-1870*, documenting one of the most fruitful and creative periods in the history of photography. Featuring works by Charles Marville (cobblestone alleyways and ancient buildings); Louis-Emile Durandelle (sculptural ornamentation in the Paris Opera); Edouard-Denis Baldus and Gustave Le Gray (monuments and grand buildings of Paris, such as le Palais du Louvre and le Palais Royale); Julien Villeneuve (nudes); and others. Exhibition on view May 5-July 2. 49 Geary St., 5th Floor. Info: 415-421-0122; www.kochgallery.com

WANNA SUBMIT?

Send your calendar event listings to:

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Unbreakable allegiance

Good omens at AEF's 'Fortune Teller's Ball'

by Mister Marcus

It isn't very difficult to keep supporting an agency you've been involved with since its very beginning. It's even more of an incentive to continue the romance when you were honored to be the first Honorary Co-Chair along with Sharon McNight—the "S&M Year" (for Sharon & Marcus) they called it. The first-ever AEF benefit was held in a restaurant near Folsom on 11th Street where Slim's nightclub now stands. From the beginning, the AEF has enjoyed the full support of almost all of San Francisco's leather community. This past Sunday night, April 24 was the 23rd annual event, with the "Fortune Teller's Ball" the theme. It was in a designer warehouse near 15th & Folsom, a South of Market venue where it rightfully belongs, thanks to the largesse of IMG owner Tony Abraham. There are countless volunteers and donors too numerous to mention here, but through their efforts, it was another successful endeavor with food, beverages (adult and otherwise), fortune-tellers, tarot-card readers, astrology seers and a flawless group of belly-dancers.

Gary Virginia, Glenn Sutter, Leslie Ewing, Harry Lit and Allen Eggman were honored, as well as the Real Bad (dance party) Group. Lenny Broberg was the master of ceremonies.

Seems as though Lenny has gotten himself involved with a young-ish dude who claims to be 42, but observers think he's less than 24. At least this one has a job, a savings account, a car and good looks!

Volunteer bartenders Ken Ferraris and Julian Marshburn were attired in unique costume creations by Ken, and now they're calling Ken "Designer Ken Wang" (as in Vera).

Overheard at one table was the dish that a certain member of a certain royal clan, who performed at the Sacramento Coronation the

night before, blew it big-time and ended "her" number by crashing down on the stage with the wig flying into the audience! Not a pretty picture. Reminds me of a certain drag beauty pageant I judged at Esta Noche several years ago, where all the other contestants disputed the winner, and a riot ensued! No riot in Sacto, but a flurry of wags were aghast.

Powerhouse bartender Carlton Paul arrived on the arm of Mike Polansky, who wasted no time savoring the delicacies at the buffet tables. If Mike is not careful, he may end up being compared to a certain prominent Southern California "grazer" who can clear a buffet faster than a swarm of locusts on the plains of Africa! The silent auction was a choice array of great items, but the bidding got so high you would have had to take out a loan to get what you wanted. Don "Ho" Tse and Mark Paladini accompanied "Mama" Reinhardt, and were dressed to the "nines" in spiffy attire. But the AEF has always been an "optional" dress affair. One guy wore so much silver lamé and glitter dust, it hurt your eyes just to look at him.

Oh, it was a fun night alright,

and all kidding aside, you had to be there to see the "faithful" come together to support a great organization. If you didn't make it, well, there's next year!

And furthermore

Belated birthday greetings to John Gardiner, the proprietor of the SF Eagle Tavern who celebrated another milestone just last night (Wednesday) with food, music, laughter and many wishes for "many more."

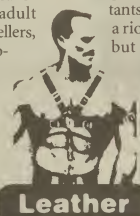
In Los Angeles over the past weekend, the Regiment of the Black & Tans engineered their annual "Maneuvers" uniform weekend, with a healthy number of participants glorifying the uniform-lovers among us. Always a spiffy event.

Speaking of uniforms, the Leather Archives & Museum in Chicago announces the opening on May 7 of its newest gallery, exhibiting uniforms along with media and artifacts related to uniforms through the efforts of Andy Mangels. Check it out when you go to Chicago next month for IML.

The Folsom Street Events organizers want you to know that the annual poster contest is in progress with cash prizes for the winning entries. For more info: www.folsomstreetevents.org.



Former Mr. SF Leather (1996) handsome Gary Virginia admires the red crystal heart signifying the Darrell Yee Community Volunteer Award at the AIDS Emergency Fund Awards Gala, Sunday, April 24. Well-deserved, and bravo!



Leather

EVENTURES IN LEATHER

Thursday, April 28

2nd half of the Bare Chest 2006 Calendar finals at the Powerhouse at 2200. The final 12 for next year's edition will be revealed.

Weekend April 29-May 1

CLAW fundraising extravaganza in Cleveland, Ohio by Dennis McMahon & Bob Miller. Tribal Fire Weekend in Oklahoma City, Okla. Dynamic Diversions BDSM weekend for women in Denver.

Wednesday, May 4

Nipple Night at the Powerhouse Bar from 2100 to closing sponsored by www.nippleplay.com for men into big nips and big pecs. Free coatcheck if you are shirtless. Also draft beer and "twisted nipple shots"

Weekend May 6-8

Sacramento Leather Sir/boy contest at The Bolt.

Boy Fest in San Diego celebrates their 5th anniversary mostly at the Hole. Naming San Diego Leather Daddy/boy, and a mud party. Sounds like fun to me!

Friday, May 6

Leather & Uniform Night at Renegades in San Jose, with fantasies performed and drawings for a swing at ... er, uh, a Human Pinata!

Saturday, May 7

With an honorable record of community support and involvement, the Edge Bar celebrates their 15th anniversary tonight from 1600-2000. Surprises galore. Crystal is the anniversary theme, so expect lots of glitter!

Sunday, May 8

It's "Mama's" birthday party from 1600-2000 at Daddy's Bar. No gifts, but you can bring canned food to benefit Project Open Hand.

PORN

Beat the c(l)ock

by John F. Karr

Since it's never too late to be up-to-date, why shouldn't a sexo remake of *Run, Lola, Run* hit our DVD players seven years after the German flick was the talk of the town? For the same reason, why shouldn't I review the sexo, even though it's over 6 months old? If you remember, in *Run, Lola, Run*, an actress named Franke Potente ran to save her boyfriend's life. In *Countdown*, an actor named Franko Potente runs to suck his boyfriend's load. If this isn't quite the do-or-die scenario of the original, the sexo offers the complication that the hot-to-trot boyfriend will wait only two hours for Franko to get all the way across Berlin — and wouldn't you know, Franko's car is broken down. So run, Franko, run.

Franko's mad dash is fueled by the fact that his boyfriend is Thom Barron, looking as solidly Teutonic, tall, and shaved-all-over as ever. That's a pretty good description of most of the guys in this film. True, Tim Vincent is swarthy, with an inky stubble on his face and a forest of jet black hair on his chest that made me think he was Sicilian. Then I saw he was circumcised, and realized he must be Arabic. There's only one other cut cock, that I can tell, belonging to



Karnal Knowledge

American star Jake Corwin. But this Centaur Films release is a Cazzo production, meaning the 18 other guys in *Countdown* are hardcore Berliners. These tattooed and pierced skinheads have slick bodies and shaved groins. Their asses are open, and their cocks ringed. They're a feral bunch. Not at all romantic. But a sly enthusiasm shows through their rough sportfucking.

Franko is remarkably unharried as he hurries through Berlin, considering that he's not only shot at, drugged, and shackled, but robbed and run over as well. No matter what the mishap, though, he springs up to zip along until



Christopher Scharf is also a high-school teacher.

another improbable sexual adventure lands in his lap. When a thief grabs his cell phone, Franko pursues the guy into a cellar where the bad guy roughs up a buddy in an SM-tinged encounter — the kind of nasty sex where there's bootlicking and butt-smacking, and the guy spits in your mouth. Then Franko runs into craggy-faced, blonde leather-

man Willi Wonder, who enters a hairdressing salon where his boyfriend is screwing a client. Oh, yes — you're going to see a vagina. With a really big German cock squooshing in and out. When boyfriend sees Willi, however, he loses all interest in gal and shoves his monster cock into guy. With boyfriend churning up his insides, Willi shoots a heavy load, then happily catches most of boyfriend's jiz in his mouth.

Franko runs on, encountering the counterman beating off in a deli, five humongously hung black men gangbang a husky white boy in a sex club, and a threesome going on in a restroom. Then

Franko's shot by a sniper's poisoned dart, and wakes up to find himself held captive in the psycho's apartment, with psycho throwing a mean fuck into a lanky dude who's strapped down and spread-eagled on an examination table. Whoa! Bondage fuck, with incredible insertion shots. When psycho passes out, the guys escape.

Cream filling

Franko runs past an art gallery in which two studly, hard-cocked young men share a sizzling fuck as nonplussed art-lovers talk amongst themselves. One of the guys is glam-top Christopher Scharf, who, I learn at the Centaur website, is a Swiss high-school teacher. Perhaps those are his students, applauding appreciatively when his savory cock sprays a most artistic load across the gallery.

Then oh, my god! Franko's hit by a taxi whose

driver was distracted by the guys making out in the back seat. Would you believe, they stuff him in the trunk, hop back in the cab, and continue their trashy trafficking through Berlin. After they've creamed all over the backseat, they stop to let Franko out, and wow, he's just as fine as he was when the sniper's knock-out drug wore off in a snap, and away he runs. But could Thom actually wait all this time for him? You know a guy will always tell ya he'll wait, but then he'll be sticking it into the first boy who passes by. In this case, it's Mr. Scharf, whom we're so happy to see again that we don't even ask how he got from the art gallery to the luo before Franko. The film climaxes in a nutbuster threeway as Christopher bottoms, and Franko gets holes stuffed at each end of his body.

Countdown careens like a sexual thrill-ride, but I wish I could have spent more time at each of the scenes. Nine of them flash by in only 100 minutes. But the rush is part of the rush, I guess, and first-time director Sven Jungbluth has got the tone so right, with the quirk and the snap so consistent, that I didn't mind. Sorta. There's lots of pics at www.Centaur-Films.com. ▼

Thielemann

◀ page 38

out either one.

Thielemann's broad, expansive, seamless interpretation of the Fifth, rich as a swag of heavy velvet drapery and fluid as mercury, opens with the most compelling account of the soft, treading opening I've heard. From that first hushed figure, at the limit of audibility, you know something's up. How an interpretation can sustain the kind of trajectory this one does over a four-movement, 80-minute work with no sense of tension is an unanswerable riddle. But it does, completing the score's great arc without slackening its attention or flagging in energy.

Not only are the rhythms in perfect proportion throughout, so are the dynamics. The great first theme wells up out of the ensemble with unmatched stealth, makes its glorious declaration in one

long phrase, and then falls back into the surrounding textures, awaiting its inevitable return.

The conductor's principle virtue has always been his uncanny ability to make every instrumental line in the densest orchestral passages texturally clear. Here he goes the extra step of making each of them so achingly beautiful and strong they challenge credibility. The attention to detail is fanatical, yet the cumulative effect is a sense of inevitability, not fussiness.

It would be embarrassing to say how many times I have listened to this CD, trying to find words that avoid cliché as decisively as Thielemann's interpretation does, then succumbing again to its transfixing beauties. This is Bruckner playing at its most exalted, raising the second-movement Adagio to the same lofty plateau as the more famous, later ones.

Good scruples

Harnoncourt's equally valid, compelling interpretation could hardly be more different. His feeling for the music's overall architecture is as sure as Thielemann's, and the detail he elicits from the keenly responsive Vienna Philharmonic is as sharp, finely honed, and eloquent. The scrupulous Harnoncourt makes this a must-have for Bruckner-lovers as the only recording to include some corrections to the score in Bruckner's own hand that have not yet appeared in previously official editions, but will.

Taking generally crisper tempos than Thielemann (but, interestingly, slower in the Scherzo), he delivers a Fifth not only devoid of sentimentality but scoured of it. It's a gruffer, craggier piece under Harnoncourt, but no less exciting or profound a journey. Both reach the blazing Finale having achieved and earned it. Just don't miss the Thielemann. ▼

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No horsing around in Berkeley

White Horse Inn welcomes you into the neighborhood mix

by Mike Sher and
Mark des Jardins

Many years ago, when Mike of this column was a student at UC-Berkeley, he rented a small studio apartment on Telegraph near Alcatraz. He hadn't come out yet, so he was mystified by the throngs of gaily-clad men and women going to a large building on the corner. What was it? A club? A large party?

What it turned out to be was the White Horse Inn, 6543 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. The White Horse is one of the East Bay's (and probably Bay Area's) oldest drinking and dance establishments, according to manager Gilbert de Jesus.

Its origin is unusual for a gay bar: a Chinese restaurant also called The White Horse, which opened in 1933. Even from the start, notes Gilbert, the place was gay- and lesbian-friendly, something which took a bit of courage in the '30s. In '45, the Chinese cuisine became "to go" permanently, and the bar adopted its present format of drinks and dancing.

Walk in, and you'll see the bar on your right and a single row of stools with mirrors on your left. In back is a lounging area, with pool

table and a friendly fireplace. There are two televisions, one big screen. Weekdays, it's more of an adult crowd, but on weekends, students and younger faces flock.

Through a door in the back is the large wooden dance-floor. A former owner used to be friends with George Bankovich, the late owner of Polk Street's departed Reflections, and its sign adorns the wall. There's dancing from Thursday to Sunday.

As an indication of its long and cordial relationship with the university, all students with ID get in free on Thursday nights.

Friday is NRG, with modern music. Saturday is Top 40. As you might expect,

Thursday is College Night. Go Bears! Cover on Thursday is \$4. Friday and Saturday, it's \$5.

On Monday to Friday from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., there's a happy hour with drink and beer specials. In the collegiate tradition on Saturdays and Sundays from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., there's a beer bust. \$10 will get you all the Bud draft you can drink.

Gilbert proudly points out the new patio, where you can enjoy your libation with a taste of Telegraph. He reflects on his six years with the White Horse. He started as a bartender with the Turf Club in Hayward, and when present owner Chuck Davis came on



Friendly White Horse Inn bartender Disraeli pours the martinis with a certain panache at the plank.

board six years ago, he joined the team as manager. Because of the paperwork needed to transfer a bar, he's actually been involved in the White Horse longer than Chuck.

Sports are an important part of the bar's life. The White Horse sponsors the Seals, a gay softball team, in the city. Every Monday night is the pool tournament. There's a \$5 entry fee, and the number 1 and 2 winners split the

pot.

Once a month, go-go dancers liven things up, and coming with the summer will be twice-monthly drag shows. There are holiday spreads for Christmas and St. Patrick's Day.

The bar is proud of its recent contribution to tsunami relief. They'll be participating in Dining for Life, where 25% of the proceeds go to worthy causes.

Gilbert mentions the absolute

mix of people at the White Horse — every race, sex, age and orientation. Join the swirling crowds on the weekend on the dance floor, and you can see for yourself. ▼

White Horse Inn, 6543 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley. (510) 652-3820. Web address: www.whitehorsebar.com. Open 3 p.m. to 2 a.m. Mon. & Tue.; 1 p.m. to 2 a.m. Wed.-Sun.

SF Film Festival

◀ Arts cover

rected, co-edited from 250 hours of video by Steven Cheslik-De-Meyer) is entertaining but also intensely troubling. When the relationship starts to unravel, when the guys start to fight offstage but on camera, we feel as if we have a stake in the outcome. In the end, the fate of Y'all is the fate of many show-biz relationships, but we feel for these guys because they are us. (Kabuki, 4/30, 5/5)

Murderball Filmmakers Henry Alex Rubin and Dana Adam Shapiro shagged Sundance's Audience Award for American Documentary with their kinetic look at the competition between two rival quadriplegic rugby teams, who play in *Mad Max*-style wheelchairs.

Rubin and Shapiro maintain an intimate but unsentimental relationship with these guys by probing a vicious rivalry between the American and Canadian male



Murderball is a look at the competition between quadriplegic rugby teams.

teams. The coach of the Canadian team is a triple-A type personality, a former player named Joe Soares. Imagine Robert Duvall's Bull Meechum Air Force fighter pilot from *The Great Santini* in a wheelchair. Soares' chief rival is a hot-blooded Texan, Mark Zupan, whose disability stems from a freak accident. His best friend, Chris Igoe, was driving his pickup home drunk, and the resulting crash flung Zupan into a creek, where he hung to a tree limb for 13 hours until rescued by paramedics. The ongoing friendship between the feisty Zupan and the guilt-ridden Igoe is a haunting subplot.

Murderball, or quad rugby, is a real, brutal sport that combines the best or worst qualities of regular rugby, roller derby and just a touch of demolition derby, to pro-

vide a thrill-filled 32 minutes of action. We see how the guys play, party, and yes, compete for girlfriends. It turns out that many quad guys have lost neither the drive for sex nor the ability to perform. This is a moving film that will completely alter your outlook on people with disabilities. (Note: the first screening at Kanbar Hall at the Jewish Community Center, 3200 California St., is fully wheelchair-accessible, 4/28; Kabuki, 4/29)

Mouth to Mouth Alison Murray's debut feature supposes that a young, middle-class girl joins a European version of the Moonies, winding up in a prisonlike commune in Portugal. Yeah, life can be that stupid, and this film, with its kinetic camerawork and very hip soundtrack, gives a good feel for what it's like to be young and Eu-



Mouth to Mouth: a middle-class girl joins a Euro version of the Moonies.

ropean today. Too long, slowly paced, but engaging. (Kabuki, 4/29, 5/3)

The Joy of Life Jenni Olson's awesome debut feature is actually two film novellas that straddle parallel themes of joy and despair — one found in the embrace of a lover, the other in a desperate leap from one of the world's most heartbreakingly beautiful landmarks.

The first novella describes the bittersweet longings of a romantic butch dyke for the many girls in her life. As read by transgender "queer boy/dyke" actor Harriet "Harry" Dodge (*By Hook or By Crook*), the narrator teases us with juicy tidbits from 1,001 nights of good and bad dates, until 10 minutes into the film, as if she's now sure she can trust us with some-

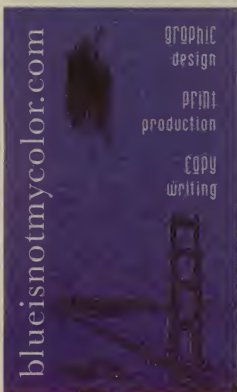
thing really intimate, she explains where she's coming from.

"How do I want to say this: I seem to struggle with this teenage boy look, and struggle with the same internalized misogyny I had as a kid.

"The veiled misogyny of my butchness, of not wanting to be a girl. I like it when fags think I'm cute, have a crush on me, treat me like one of the guys, yet this kind of psychological passing makes me even more aware of some basic element of self-loathing."

Olson employs a poetic ode to the painterly light of San Francisco, read by Beat guru Lawrence Ferlinghetti, to transition gently into the dark, second novella, which confronts the siren call of the Golden Gate Bridge for troubled souls, specifically as the site

next page ►



ARTS

Lennon

◀ page 37

with this cast of only sporadically memorable performances.

The script by Don Scardino, who conceived of the show and is its director, takes a chronological approach to Lennon's life, starting with his childhood in England and concluding, with blessed restraint, with his murder.

Unless you're a true Lennon aficionado, at least some of the scenes should provide illumination on his life. Some warts are revealed, and others are conspicuously absent. Booze is a problem; heroin is not mentioned.

Projections on several large screens provide establishing motifs for the string of scenes that often take on the trappings of pseudo-hip burlesque. When John and Yoko staged their famous Bed-In for peace, we are told that they were widely viewed as clowns, and so out come the red noses and funny outfits. Later, when depicting the world of hippie-protestors, it's as if we're in a 40th anniversary production of

Hair — and with all the authenticity that you would expect from such an exercise.

The cast does display reverence — on its collective sleeve. Before the show officially commences, cast members wander about the stage hugging their co-stars before a group hug signals that we may begin. Later, they sit on the stage watching with ecclesiastical awe a video of the real Lennon singing "Imagine."

Maybe it's too much to expect that a musical could capture John Lennon and his times, and give Lennon credit for going beyond a simple songbook format. But you have to wonder who this show is for. For those who lived through the Beatles-Lennon experience, the musical is bound to seem like a showbizzy contrivance. And for those who came along later, Lennon is unlikely to answer what all the fuss was about. ▼

Lennon will run at the Orpheum Theatre through May 14. Tickets are \$35-\$85. Call 512-7770 or go to bestofbroadway-sf.com.

SF Film Festival

◀ previous page

of her friend Mark's fatal leap in 1995. She deftly juxtaposes the origins of Frank Capra's *Meet John Doe*, with its twin themes of suicide and messianic Christianity, with bridge architect Joseph Strauss' prediction that suicide from the bridge would be neither "possible nor probable."

Olson transcends this city's at-times irksome prettiness to reveal why transcendent beauty is not an end in itself. In her director's statement, Olson explains that she's drawn to stories "about people not getting what they want." In her screen persona, Olson has Dodge assure us that sex may be the most important resource for surviving life in the too-beautiful city. "In the moment of desiring and being desired, you actually realize that you're okay." (*Kabuki*, 5/1)

The Dying Gaul Unscreent but much anticipated after its Sundance premiere, playwright Craig Lucas' film directorial debut is a romantic melodrama that combines the lust for money and movie fame with a passionate, same-sex affair. Lucas describes it as "a film about a grieving man who sells a screenplay for a lot of money to a studio. He enters into a love affair with the producer that ultimately results in the destruction of everyone in the story."

In an explosive, dialogue-driven scene, the producer (Campbell Scott) confronts the screenwriter (Peter Sarsgaard) who had written the script as a way to mourn his dead lover. "I'm sorry if I don't live up to your standards. The trouble is I'm bisexual. I like both. You want the truth. You're lucky to be only one thing. I'm not. I'm not hiding in my marriage. I need my marriage!" It's a film that uses traditional Hollywood extortion tactics plus the new scam of Internet dating to offer up an explosive screen threesome, completed by Patricia Clarkson. (*Closing Night*, *Castra*, 5/5)

Me and You and Everyone We Know If you can wrap your mind around the unique little world that first-time writer/director Miranda July creates in this funny and humane comedy, you're in for a real treat. July plays Christine, a multimedia artist who supports herself as an "Eldercab" driver. Christine is smitten by newly-divorced shoe salesman Richard

(John Hawkes), trying to raise two beautiful mixed-race sons. All the characters, kids and adults, are doing their own walk on wild side: two teenage girls "harass" a cute male classmate to the point of orgasm, a six-year-old boy gets involved in an adult Internet chat room with hilarious results. Christine and Richard make their own crazy kind of progress: two steps forward and a pratfall back. This film, suffused with a queer sensibility though minus any overt homosexuality, manages to get inside the heads of its characters without intrusive narration. (*Kabuki*, 5/1; PFA, 5/3)

Following Sean Back in the "summer of love," Ralph Arlyck was living in the Haight when he started documenting the lives of a hippie family living upstairs, with special emphasis on their four-year-old son Sean. Three decades later, Arlyck catches up with the adult Sean, and tries to discover the effect of hippiedom on the next generation. The film captivates with its time-capsule footage of a forever lost SF. (*Kabuki*, 5/1, 5/4)

Almost Brothers Director/writer Lucia Murat probes 50 years in the lives of two Brazilians, Miguel and Jorge, whose careers take them to prison in the '70s. Based on new information about life during the 21 years of Brazil's military dictatorship, the film chronicles the separate fates of a white "political prisoner" and a black "common criminal," and shows how violent gangs got their start in those fetid jail cells. It's a hard look at a vibrant if scary culture that is struggling to get its shit together on race, class and poverty, a cautionary tale for much of this hemisphere. (*Kabuki*, 4/28, 5/1)

Up Against Them All Writer/director Roberto Moreira gives us an up-close look at the unraveling life of a Sao Paulo crime lord. Teodoro (Giulio Lopes) is a pious but brutal gangster who's living with his wife and rebellious teenage daughter. When Teodoro murders his wife's lover, the wheels are set in motion for a *Mean Streets*-type climax, where a man's unwillingness to accept responsibility for his actions will bring a kind of religious retribution down on him. A crescendo of violence completes a film unrelenting in its portrait of a modern Brazil awash in religiosity and blood. (*Kabuki*, 4/28, 5/2) ▼

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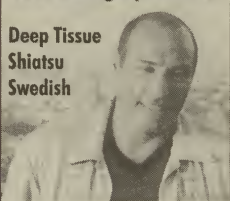
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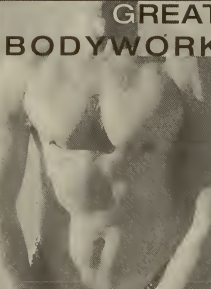
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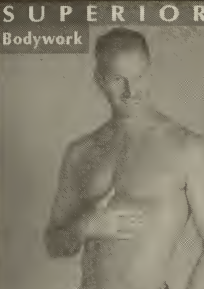
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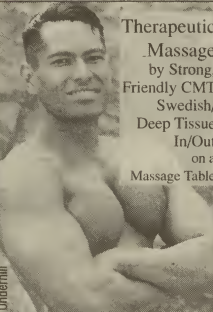
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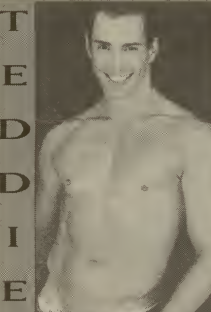
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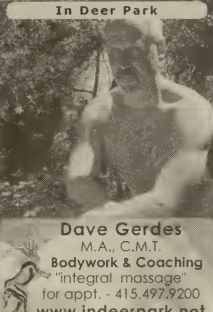
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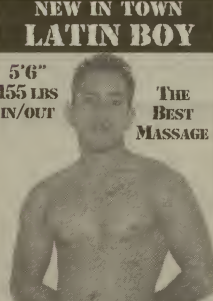
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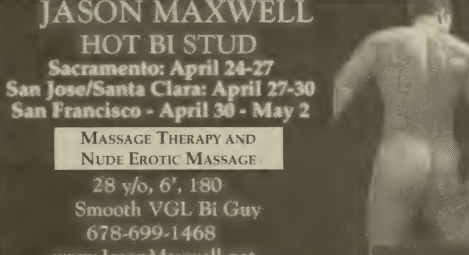
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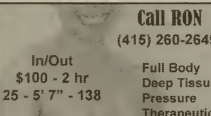
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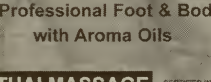
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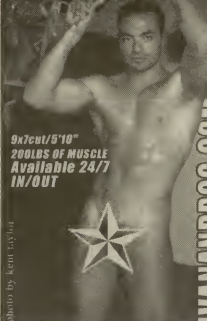
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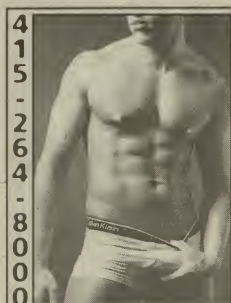
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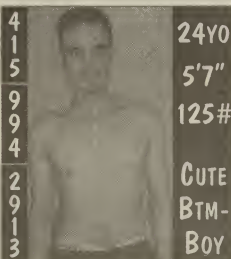


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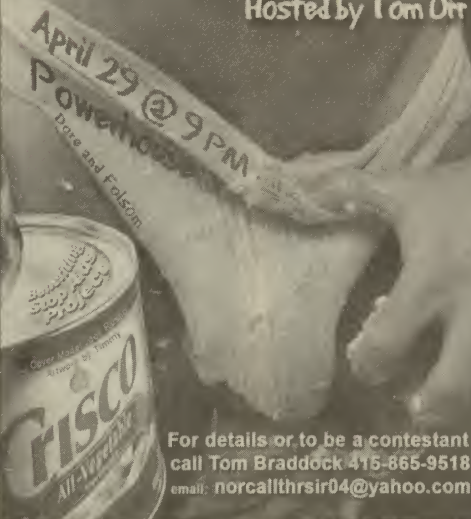
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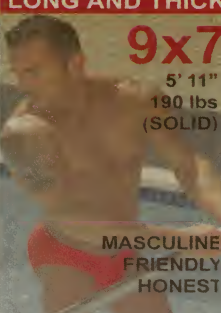
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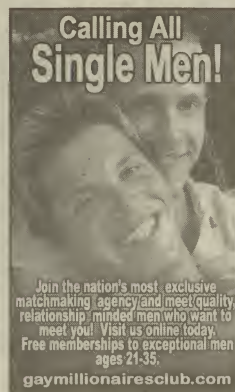


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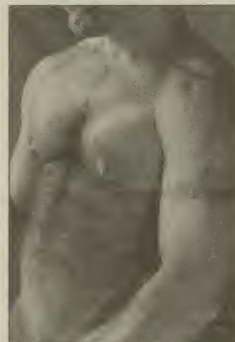
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E17

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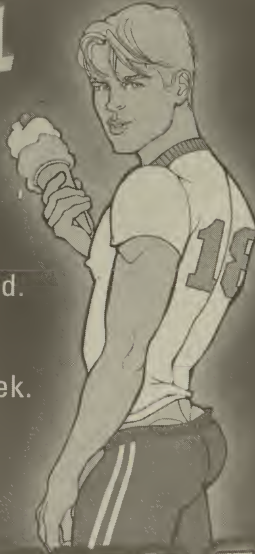
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Card Number

3-Digit Security Code

Expiration Date

Signature

Name

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name

Telephone

Address

City

State

Zip

Number of Issues

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